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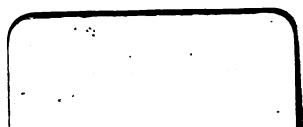
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Exaudius  
OR THE  
Messenger  
OF  
Wandsbeck



600080959.







CLAUDIUS:

OR, THE

MESSENGER OF WANDSBECK,

AND

HIS MESSAGE.

"ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, WHERE IS THE GOOD WAY,  
AND WALK THERREIN."

LONDON:

WARD AND CO., 27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1859.

*210. m. 105,*



JOHN CHILDS AND SON, PRINTERS.

It may be glorious to write  
Thoughts that shall glad the two or three  
High souls, like those far stars that come in sight  
Once in a century ;

But better far it is to speak  
One simple word, which now and then  
Shall waken their free nature in the weak  
And friendless sons of men ;

To write some earnest verse or line,  
Which, seeking not the praise of art,  
Shall make a clearer faith and manhood shine  
In the untutored heart.

He who doth this, in verse or prose,  
May be forgotten in his day,  
But surely shall be crowned at last with those  
Who live and speak for aye.

LOWELL.





## PREFACE.

THE following pages consist chiefly of Letters, Essays, and Fragments selected from the Works of Claudius. They were called forth by the belief that these Works are almost unknown in England, and the conviction that they only require to be brought under notice in order to gain the approval of a considerable class of readers.

I regret that the sketch of Claudius's Life, which in a manner connects these extracts, is necessarily so imperfect. What little information relating to him actually exists, lies widely scattered, while at best it is only fragmentary, and totally destitute of that anecdotal element which invests biography with so much charm. In the absence, therefore, of adequate materials and ability for the production of an elaborate "*Life*," I have attempted merely to link together events in their proper chronological order, narrating them as briefly as possible, and accepting only such as I believed were calculated to throw light upon Claudius in relation to his written Works. For most of the detail of my sketch, I am indebted to Herbst's "*Life of Claudius*," lately published in Germany.\* This writer has diligently collected all relating to Claudius on which he could lay hand, and his book abounds in generous and thoughtful criticism—the more attractive, as the work is thoroughly a labour of love.

\* *Matthias Claudius, der Wandsbecker Bote.* Gotha, 1857.

Notwithstanding the low estimate, formed and fostered by certain German writers, of Claudius's merits as an author, some of his country's greatest ornaments have spoken warmly in his favour. The highly-gifted Niebuhr declared that he yielded to few in his love for the writings of Claudius; Tholuck, eminent in Theology, recommends the study of them to such as are in quest of religious culture; and Vilmar, the genial historian of German Literature, avers that, in spite of their little defects, "they contain a noble kernel."

Claudius is generally known in Germany as the WANDSBECK MESSENGER, and it is those parts of his Works which I believe to contain his *Message* that are here brought forward. In rendering the text of my author into English, I must plead guilty to having taken liberties here and there with its punctuation, *but with nothing further*. His poems, with few exceptions, I have left untouched; feeling that this part of the task must be performed, if at all, by others—better acquainted both with the art of turning German verse into English, and with poetry in general. As a rule, the translation is literal, and I have endeavoured to preserve Claudius's quaint and peculiar style.

H. J. C.

*Warwick, August, 1859.*

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# LIFE OF CLAUDIUS.

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## CHAPTER I.

THE Claudius family is traceable to a period nearly as far back as that of the Reformation; and the Danish border of Germany appears to have been for the most part its homestead. Claudius Pauli, or Claus Paulsen (for the one name is merely a translation of the other), is the first of whom we have any mention: he was pastor at Emmerlef, and died in 1586. It may be called with right a *priestly* family,—for nearly all the descendants of this ancestor were clergymen of the Reformed church. Matthias Claudius, father of him whose Life and Writings we are about to bring under notice, was the minister of Reinfeld, a market town not far from Lübeck, was twice married, and on the fifteenth of August, 1740, his second wife, whose maiden name was Marie Lorck, gave birth to the Matthias Claudius of our sketch.

Particulars of his childhood are altogether wanting. Reinfeld, with its deep woods and lakes, bordered and sheltered by far-stretching hills, was well adapted to foster a naturally meditative mind; and when the time came for Claudius to form and elaborate those principles which were at the bottom of all his labours, Reinfeld was the place chosen for the task; and we find him, after having travelled far and seen much of the world, stealing down to his native place, to

ponder over the weightiest subjects in its solitudes. It was a happy home for him. Of his father we gather little information; but from the song written by Claudius on the event of his death, we may certainly conclude that "he was a good man," for the poet uses these very words. His mother was of a calm and retiring disposition: many a time, as a child, he tells us, he had sat on her knee and joined with her in singing Paul Gerhardt's beautiful hymn: "Commit thou all thy ways."

In due time the boy was sent to school at Ploen, a few miles distant from his home. Latin, Greek, and Mathematics constituted the round of study, and the progress which Claudius made in the first two branches was highly creditable. He cared little for them merely as languages, regarding them as means and not ends; their import, the splendid poetry and philosophy which they veiled, were everything to him. His attainments in Mathematics were far from scanty, and his school days already found him making progress in the Danish and English languages.

In 1759 Claudius left Ploen for Jena, there to study Theology. A severe illness, accompanied with hæmorrhage and other alarming symptoms, led him to alter his purpose, and he exchanged Theology for Law. Herbst remarks on this occasion: "It is possible, indeed, that at that time his heart and soul were not so completely enlisted on the side of Theology, and that, consistently with his inward truthfulness and honour, he would not pursue half-heartedly this important matter. The theological tendency, too, which then prevailed at Jena—Lutheran Orthodoxy already enervated by Pietism and Wolf's Philosophy, could not possibly hold out attractions to him who sought bread and not a stone." Respecting his academic career, also, we are in the dark. The first part of his "Works" furnishes an amusing account of the sort of education then in vogue at this celebrated University. "I have been to the University," he says,

"and have studied too. No, not *studied* ; but I *have* been to the University, and know something about everything. I got acquainted with some students, who showed me all round, and took me everywhere, even into the collegium. There sit the students, side by side on benches as at church, and against the window there is a seat for the Professor, who talks about this thing and the other thing, and calls it *teaching*. He who sat there when I attended, was a *Magister*, and wore a great frizzled peruke on his head, and the students told me that his erudition was much greater and more frizzled still, and that he was as capital a freethinker secretly as could be found in France or England. There might well be something in him, for it flowed from his mouth as from a cider-vat ; and he could demonstrate with the swiftness of the wind. When he had taken a subject in hand he began upon it forthwith, and before you could turn round it was demonstrated. He demonstrated, for instance, that a student *is* a student, and not a rhinoceros. For, said he, a student is either a student or a rhinoceros ; but a student is not a rhinoceros, else a rhinoceros must be a student ; but a rhinoceros is not a student, and therefore a student is a student. This might be considered self-evident ; but not one of us knew better. He said that the position : 'a student is no rhinoceros, but a student,' was a principal pillar of all philosophy, and that the *Magisters* could not plant their backs firmly enough against it, in order to keep it from tumbling down."

At Jena Claudius joined the "German Society" (*Teutsche Gesellschaft*), an association existing among the students, and founded by Fabricius in 1725—its object being : the bringing-out and development of such intellects as evinced more than ordinary vigour. It concerned itself chiefly with the *belles-lettres* ; subsequently, however, with theology and jurisprudence. The members were in the habit of assembling once a week, and reading original papers and poems in the Ger-



man language, which performances were duly collected into a volume at the close of every year. This society appears to have been the brightest spot in Claudius's university life. Of the friendships contracted by him at Jena, if such there were, we can learn nothing: as regards the University, its dissolute tendencies and low moral condition at that time were at their extreme. But Claudius, although in the very midst of it all, escaped unharmed; intent on the future, he pursued earnestly and in solitude his way. Not that he was disinclined to participate in the amenities of social intercourse, or averse to withdrawing occasionally from abstruser studies into the inviting fields of poetry and general literature; rather, indeed, the reverse: but it would seem as if, even thus early, he experienced presentiments of the Mission which he was destined to undertake, and felt that the self-denial necessarily involved in it, might be anticipated with advantage, and here first practised.

In 1760 consumption carried off his brother, Josias, who was studying theology with him at Jena. This was the occasion of a funeral oration pronounced by Matthias Claudius over the corpse, and subsequently published. The question of which it treated was: "*whether, and in how far, God destines the death of man?*" It is the first of Claudius's printed writings, and according to Herbst is crude, and written after the manner of the scholastics; dull enough, but illumined here and there by a flashing thought; a production in no way remarkable, the Claudius of twenty years later hardly to be detected in it.

"*Tandeleien und Erzählungen*"—*Trifles and Tales*—the volume in which he made his *début* as a poet, or more properly speaking, a *rhymester*, appeared in 1763. "Importless, hollow, and evincing great mental poverty," is Herbst's judgment upon it. He regards it as decidedly inferior to the oration, in many and important respects. It seems to have been a medley of rhymed school exercises, which ought never to

have seen the light ; dedicated to nobility, indeed, but a monument of bungling. The "Trifles"—rightly named—are written, for the most part, in poetical prose, with verses here and there interspersed. The "Tales" are all in verse ; comprising "instances of philanthropy, noble sentiment, virtuous fanaticism, and the like." Notwithstanding his former sentence, Herbst discovers in them "traces of a faded Christianity, sounding occasionally like an echoing memory of youth," and of "that hearty philanthropy which speaks so winningly to us in his later writings." The book was not successful, but regarded as an abortive imitation of Gerstenberg's "*Tandeleien*" published four years before, and which itself was no original : one little piece only appears in Claudius's collected Works, and is probably all that our author's later years sanctioned. It is headed :

## AT A SPRING, 1760.

"Thou little spring, all grown around with green,—  
By which sat Daphne once ; I saw her there,  
So brilliant was thy water, so serene,  
And Daphne's image on its wave, so fair !  
O should she sit upon thy banks again,  
Strive thou the lovely picture to retain !  
Then, with moist eyes, I'll softly steal away,  
And tell to her my tale of misery.  
But ah ! my tongue refuses aught to say  
When I'm before her in reality."\*

After leaving the University, Claudius spent some time at Reinfeld, where he became acquainted with Schönborn, a talented and remarkable man, and whose influence upon our student was not unimportant. His residence, only a mile or two out of Reinfeld, was the frequent resort of men of letters ; Schönborn himself being distinguished by the possession of a clear head, inclined to linguistic, mathematical, and philo-

\* Werke. Thl. 1, 2. S. 82.

sophical studies; an energy in prosecuting these not easily quelled; and a desire to further culture and the acquisition of knowledge on every side. Himself the author of several spirited odes, he was in constant intercourse, we are told, with the greatest spirits of his age—Klopstock, the Stolbergs, Goethe, and others; became a politician, and was appointed to some government post at Algiers; passed a quarter of a century in London as a Secretary of Legation, and in 1802 turned homewards. Matthias Claudius, the elder, used to call him the “Jonathan” of his son. He was a noble thinker, speculative, with sceptical tendencies; “his heart full of truth and love,” writes Herbst. The intimacy thus formed had its results for Claudius; was kept up during separation by cordial correspondence, and when, in 1802, Schönborn reached his native land, it was to settle down where he and his friend Claudius might once again be neighbours.

The office of secretary to a Count of Holstein being vacant, Claudius, through the influence of a near relative, obtained it, and accordingly, in the spring of 1764, went to Copenhagen, there to enter upon his new duties. He found in this city a distinguished circle of literary men, of whom Klopstock might be called the centre, and into which he was at once received. At that time Klopstock was perhaps the greatest name in modern German literature. Nearly twenty years before, enough had proceeded from his pen to constitute him a poet, and to establish his fame; and, at the time of which we are now speaking, his residence at Copenhagen was owing to a pension granted him through the instrumentality of the Danish minister, Bernstorff, in order that his work—“*The Messiah*,”—long ago begun, might be completed. Klopstock was emphatically a Christian—a great and good man. He is often honourably mentioned as the “Morning Star of Modern German Literature,” and although a living writer has urged in reference to Klopstock the impropriety of “quarrelling with the Morning Star for not having become a sun,” there

is yet reason to believe that with more energy, less reserve, and less love of leisure, he might have become far greater.

In this circle the growth of Claudius's mind was rapid in the extreme. "The Spanish-boots in which his '*Trifles*' had strutted," says Herbst, "soon lay behind him as outgrown children's shoes." He quickly learned to love Klopstock, who indeed was a very loveable character. In constant intercourse with one who, beyond a doubt, occupied at that time the first place in the literature of his country, and who was moreover peculiarly calculated to influence the youthful mind, Claudius, arrived at the most receptive age, could hardly help being led by him. Moreover, that veneration for the good and great, of which Claudius already possessed a full share, met with hearty response and encouragement at the hands of Klopstock. There is a notice of Klopstock's "*Odes*" in our author's collected works, where the following remarks occur: "Reading one of these pieces for the first time, is like passing out of the bright sunshine into a darkened picture-gallery: at first we discern little or nothing, but if we wait awhile the pictures begin to grow visible and to have their proper effect; and then we close the door and shut ourselves in, and walk up and down, feeling refreshed with the imagery, and the rosy clouds, and the beautiful rainbows, and the light graces with marks of gentle emotion in their countenances. Here and there I have stumbled upon places where I felt quite giddy, and it has seemed to me as when an eagle, soaring heavenwards, has ascended to such a height that one sees merely a motion in the air, but cannot tell whether caused by the eagle, or only an aerial illusion."

City-life had grown irksome to Claudius: in August, 1765, we find him at Reinfeld again, and intending to make a protracted stay. In spite of the literary advantages which Copenhagen afforded, it is probable that he felt the need of that solitude and retirement, in which, as Jean Paul assures

us, great principles best thrive, to be more pressing just then than any other; too urgent to allow him to forego it on any consideration whatever. For three years Reinfeld was again his home. While in Copenhagen, Shakespeare and English Literature in general, together with several branches of science, had occupied him: to these studies he now added the earnest and devout reading of the Scriptures, for which the quiet of a country parsonage was peculiarly favourable. Possibly, and indeed probably, the great epoch of Claudius's spiritual life—what is called *conversion* or *new birth*—fell within this period. We do not learn, nor is it of consequence to know, whether he then subscribed duly to any outward church-formula, but we believe that from this time forward the walk and conversation of Matthias Claudius was that of the genuine Christian. As regards verbal confessions of faith: Claudius might or might not have cared to fashion one just then; but certain it is, that throughout a long life "to confess Christ before men" was his chief glory, and to do this *effectually* his highest aim.

Three years thus employed passed swiftly away; and now Claudius was about to enter upon a *bonâ fide* literary life;—to ply literature not merely amateur-fashion, but with a certain object in view, and this a two-fold one: not only the means chosen by him to provide his daily bread, but also to enunciate the grand fact that "man cannot live by bread alone." How he effected this,—in what manner he performed his task, we shall discover anon.

In the autumn of 1768 Claudius left Reinfeld for Hamburg, having accepted an engagement in the editorial department of the *Adresscomptoirnachrichten* (Intelligence-office News). At the time of which we speak, Hamburg—long distinguished as a literary and commercial city—was rapidly becoming the head-quarters of German thought. For many years the National Literature had been, as it were, under a cloud, and, with here and there an exception,

little of late had been written beyond common-place prose and tame or extravagant rhyme. The spirit of religion in Germany had given way to the strict letter of it, and the intellectual life of man, deep-sunken in the mire of formalism, looked out upon prospects that were anything but cheering. A spectral dogmatism, arrayed in the "form of godliness" and glorying in dust and ashes, had taken upon itself to stigmatize the embellishments of life as the vanities of the world, and to pour storms of holy indignation upon those who ventured to speak in their favour. And it was to do battle with this monster—to destroy the miserable huts of pseudo-religion which deformed society—that the labours of Klopstock, Lessing, Herder, and Goethe tended; and although it may be said that these great men were not destined to lay hand to the *construction* of an edifice that should replace those huts, yet none will deny that they at least furnished abundant *materials* thereto; that they were true pioneers and pathmakers, labourers—the fruit of whose labours will be thankfully appropriated for many a century to come.

Hamburgh was doomed to be the forum of a sharp struggle between Formalism and Scepticism. Like a brisk north-wind, invigorating to the healthful, but calamitous and death-dealing to the sick, the new doctrine had swept over the city with notable effect. Formalism, with its condemnation of all that its limited span was unable to compass—of a poetry which, just waxing strong, was not measurable by *its* standards of strength—of a Drama which very possibly might expose its inconsistencies and unmask its falsities—of a culture, in short, which would render the baby-garb that it provided for the mind useless and contemptible—formalism, we say, stood little chance against its fierce and sinewy opponent. The head of the party was the notorious Goeze, chief-pastor of St. Katherine's—and brought under notice by the writings of Lessing, in which he figures, not

altogether honourably. "In all principal questions," says Herbst, "Claudius placed himself on the side which was opposed to this man, and there we have to seek his friends. It is of high importance for his life, that in the narrow space of Hamburg he found representatives of almost all the directions of that powerful flight which the national culture then took. The fresh free breeze blew here with peculiar keenness—science, poetry, politics, social life, education, the school—all traced its operations, and in each of these departments Claudius found spokesmen and reformers immediately included within his circle of friends." \*

The more intimate of those who formed this circle demand a passing notice. With Bode, the publisher and proprietor of the paper on which Claudius was engaged, he was brought much into contact. Bode's history is a very remarkable one. As a boy he had kept sheep in Brunswick, the land of his birth, and gradually, favoured here and there by fortune, but far more by the possession of indomitable perseverance and talent high above mediocrity, had risen to his present position. Distinguished as a musician and a zealous and intelligent advocate of the people, whence he had sprung, he was also the translator of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, and the publisher of the principal writings of those who entertained what were known as *the new opinions*. Reimarius—father and son,—the former an uncompromising Rationalist, the latter after the same type, but not so highly developed, both of them eminent in various ways, and distinguished by a philanthropy "from the heart outwards;"—Basedow, a very heterodox critic indeed, "strong only to deny" we are told—able enough to overthrow, *unable* to construct (at least to construct *effectually*); Alberti, pastor under Goeze, and given to the "new ideas;" Enlers, ever ready to sympathize with what he held to be the weal and woe

\* Herbst. S. 53.

of mankind; Buseh, great in mathematics, and around whose hearth the little band from time to time mustered—were amongst the most distinguished of those into whose society Claudius was now thrown.

But the sun and centre we have yet to name—the brilliant Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. A never-resting spirit was his; sceptical, and a martyr to scepticism, he never found peace. He has beautifully delineated his own character in these lines, written only two or three years before his death:—  
 “Not the truth which a man possesses or thinks he possesses, but the upright effort applied by him for its acquisition, constitutes his worth. For it is not through the possession of truth, but through the search after it, that the powers of man become widened; and in this alone his ever-increasing perfection consists. Possession renders a man passive, indolent, proud.— \* \* \* If God were to hold truth in His right hand, and the single and constantly active impulse towards truth—although with the additional term that I should be continually and eternally wandering—in His left, and to say to me: Choose! I would humbly fall upon the left, and say, Father, this grant me!—unsullied truth is for Thee alone!”\* His intellect possessed a polemic keenness rarely equalled and perhaps never surpassed; his judgment was good, and his standard of Art not to be questioned. These qualities constituted him at once the greatest critic of the day; some have gone so far as to assert that in this department of literature his peer cannot be found. Of the Hamburg group he was the generally recognised leader, and when Claudius became acquainted with him, he had written enough to entitle him to a distinguished place in the history of his country’s literature. An intimate friendship soon sprung up between the two in spite of their differences: “I also have known Lessing,”

\* Lessing’s Werke. Bd. 9. S. 97.



wrote Claudius; "I will not say that he was my friend, but I was his. And although I cannot adopt his creed, yet for all that highly do I esteem his head."\* He was a man of sterling worth; clear-headed, sincere, earnest; caustic—at times perhaps too much so; friendly amongst his friends, and by heart-qualities adorning a life to which rest and peace were unknown. A man true to his vocation, sad as it was; for Scepticism *has* a vocation, if it be merely that of clearing the field of what can only cumber, and leaving the ground open to the *new* and the *better*.

Claudius gained much by his residence in Hamburg. From a wider look-out on men and things he learned to pierce through appearances into the underlying realities,—to distinguish the spurious from the genuine, the false from the true; above all, learned to follow the latter with undivided soul. Those who had assisted him hither, and through whose instrumentality in part he had attained to so important a stand-point, had thus sharpened a vision which could detect in *them* also qualities utterly at variance with a system which had now become everything to Claudius—the system of Christianity; and although the inducements to forsake the advocacy of so unpopular a doctrine, and the temptations to remain an honoured member of the Hamburg group of Freethinkers, were doubtless great, he yet chose to separate himself from these, and in the firm persuasion that the Christian Religion—instead of being made subordinate to literature, science, and art—must be everything, if anything, he preferred to quit the high-road, and "to prepare in the desert the way of the Lord."

In the year 1770, Herder, afterwards one of the leaders of modern German Literature, happening to visit Hamburg for a short time, was received into the society of which Claudius formed part. A friendship quickly sprung up between Claudius and Herder, the fruits of which were of

\* Claudius: Werke. Thl. 5. S. 119.

great moment—at least to Claudius, if not to both. Herder was an extraordinary man: although too satirical to be generally attractive on first acquaintance, a brief intercourse with him served nevertheless to assure Claudius that, while his new friend was the possessor of genius and talents of a high order, he was not wanting in the requirements of friendship. At the time of his visit to Hamburgh he had already published his *Fragments touching the more modern Literature of Germany*” and a work entitled “*Critical Woods*”—earnests of extended labours in the future. Like Claudius, he also was in search of a religious basis on which he might depend, and which should provide him with a standard of universal application. Hurried decision distinguished the positions at which this highly gifted man arrived; and these he strenuously asserted and eloquently maintained. At once a scholar, and an advocate of intellectual culture not only on account of its usual results, but also for its own sake, he manifested a noble and philanthropic catholicity—a *humanity* in the broadest acceptation of the word. His was emphatically a nature of upward tendencies. Although not an orthodox Christian, there can be no doubt that Herder both recognized the *practical* essentials of Christianity, and strove to actualize them. “Why do *you* not write the Life of Christ?” inquired Lavater of him on one occasion. “I write the Life of Christ, *I*? Never! The Evangelists have done this as it ought to be done: let *us* not *write* it but *live* it,” was the fine reply. His life was largely productive for literature; his works, occasionally blemished by errors as they are, will probably remain a monument of German thought and eloquence for all time. He died in 1803, begging those near to “refresh him with a great thought.” The intercourse between Herder and Claudius extended over many years. Each perceived the other’s excellencies: Claudius saw in Herder “the man for me,” as he said; and soon discovered that the qualities of his heart were not in-

significant compared even with those of his head. And Herder found very much to love and admire in the simplicity and plain straightforwardness of Claudius. Some years after their first meeting he calls him, in a letter to Gleim, "a glorious fellow,—glorious as every line of his writings;" and again, to Lavater he writes: "I have spent a happy day with Claudius, the purest man I have almost ever known. Never have I so wished to live in the society of any one as in that of Claudius." And when Herder published his little book—"*Voices of the Nations in their Songs*"\*—one of the selected specimens was Claudius's *Abendlied*. This is sufficient to prove Herder's opinion of his merit as poet; respecting his prose, the same writes, in a letter to Merck dated 1771:—"The best things I have read during the whole of my sojourn here (Bückeburg) are some papers by my friend Claudius; destitute of learning and almost of import, but intended for certain silver chords of the heart which are rarely struck." How true this remark, and more especially as regards Claudius's later writings, we shall presently learn.

In 1770 Claudius's connection with the "*Intelligence Office News*" came to a close, and he now began a kind of "guerilla warfare" with poverty. Before long, however, his friend Bode, the publisher, about to start a new journal—the "*Wandsbecker Bote*" (*Wandsbeck Messenger*)—enlisted his help, and accordingly he threw all his energies into the undertaking before him. The "Messenger" was to make its appearance at the new year, to appear four times a week, and to contain a political and an "erudite" article—the writer of the latter to be mainly—*Matthias Claudius*. Erudition, certainly, was far from occupying a prominent position in these productions. They consisted for the most part of poetry, little prose treatises, and short critiques on many subjects; we also learn that the writers were anonym-

\* 1778.

ous, and that Herder and Goethe were occasional contributors to the pages of the "Messenger."

Shortly after the new Journal made its appearance Claudius removed to Wandsbeck, a market town close to Hamburg, and giving the "Messenger" its name. Here he could work freely, and at the same time enjoy occasionally the society of his Hamburg friends. It was his *home*; the larger portion of his life—his most active and some of his happiest years—were spent there, and there too he died.

From Claudius the journalist we have now for a moment to turn aside, and look at him in another character. One September day, of the same year in which he left Hamburg for Wandsbeck, he had been out hunting, and at the close of the chase had accompanied one of the party home. "Have you shot anything to-day?" was one of the first inquiries addressed to him. "Yes, I have made a very good hit to-day," was the reply; and soon it came to light that Claudius had been talking over a little matter with his hunting friend, having immediate reference to one of this friend's daughters, and that the father had agreed to receive him as a son-in-law, provided she who was most interested in the transaction, and supposed as yet to know nothing about it, should accept him. In due time matters were quite satisfactorily arranged, and Rebecca was his affianced wife. He had known her slightly for some time it appears—had been struck with her as a girl at school. He tells us, very naively, that he felt exceedingly relieved, and "as if a great stone had fallen from his heart," when he discovered that his love was not unreturned. From time to time we catch glimpses of her in his biography. She was of a devout and loving nature, all simplicity and affection, of joyous temperament, and beautiful in face and form. Claudius had chosen well; as wife and mother she displayed sympathies and virtues as rare as they were excellent.

Things did not go on prosperously with the Wandsbeck Messenger. At the end of its first year, Claudius believed that "it would not hold out much longer." He confided this to Herder, together with a project for collecting his "*bons mots*" from the newspaper he had lately been connected with, and from the Journal on which he was at present engaged, and publishing them in a separate form. Hither, therefore, his attention was now turned, and in due time the collection was ready for the press. As no publisher could be found for it, the first two parts, forming a small volume of scarcely more than a hundred pages, were published, after considerable delay, by subscription, in the early part of 1775. The title Claudius adopted, and under which he advertised his book, was "*ASMUS omnia sua SECUM portans, or the Collective Works of the Wandsbeck Messenger.*"

These "first two parts" consist of mere fragments, but they are by no means despicable. We do not see in them, as in Claudius's subsequent writings, the eloquent, full-grown, and thoughtful Christian; we detect, indeed, a kind of strained effort at humour on the part of our author, an unwilling endeavour to *amuse* rather than to instruct. But, here and there, we meet with gems which betray other relations than those existing between worldly matters: earnestness will out, and Claudius the *author* must at times appear through Claudius the *mere writer*, showing himself less at home among trifles and frivolities, than among the serious businesses and realities of life. At intervals, more or less frequent, we catch glimpses of that light which glorifies several of Claudius's after-writings; and as those attempts at humour fail to disclose to us the author, and form no part of his Message, we select some of these graver passages to illustrate the book before us. They may perhaps be welcome, fragmentary as they are.

Many small critiques are scattered throughout the volume, which for the rest consists of short poems, letters, and essays.

One of the most striking critiques is that on a Paraphrase of John's Gospel: "From my youth, and throughout my life, I have delighted in reading the Bible. It contains such beautiful *parables* and *problems*, so refreshing and comforting to the heart. But I read in St John with the greatest pleasure. There is something so thoroughly wonderful about him, twilight and night, and then the swift darting flash! a few thin evening-clouds, and behind them the great full moon—something so pensive, so lofty, and so full of expectation, that one never tires of him. When I read in John's Gospel, I seem to see him before me as at the Last Supper leaning upon his Master's breast: it is as if his angel lighted me, and at certain places fell upon my neck and whispered something in my ear. I do not by far understand all that I read, but yet it often seems as if John's meaning were hovering at a distance before me; and even when I come to a quite obscure passage, I feel the presentiment of some great and glorious import which I shall comprehend by and by—and hence I fly with such alacrity to every new elucidation of John. Certainly the most of these touch merely the evening-clouds, and the moon behind them rests well."\*

Noticing Goethe's far-famed "Sorrows of Werther," Claudius writes:—

"I know not whether this be a history or a poem, but it runs on quite naturally, and can draw tears from the eyes. Yes, love is a singular thing; we cannot play with it as with a bird. I know what it is—how it traverses the whole body, how it leaps and throbs in every vein, how it sports with the head and faculties. Poor Werther! he had, else, such fine ideas and thoughts. If he had only taken a tour to Paris or Pekin! And this is just the misfortune—that a man in possession of so many gifts and graces can be so weak—and therefore a grassy mound should be raised under the church-yard-lindens, and near his grave, on which one may sit and,

\* Werke. Th. 1, 2. S. 8.

head resting on hands, weep over human infirmity. But when thou hast wept thy fill, thou gentle good youth, when thou hast wept thy fill, raise the head cheerily and replace the hand! for there is a virtue which, like love, pervades the whole body, and throbs and leaps in every nerve. According to report it can be acquired only by much earnestness and effort, and hence cannot be widely known and loved; but he who hath it shall be richly rewarded, in sunshine, in frost, and in rain, and when friend Hain \* comes with his scythe."†

Some of the remarks on Klopstock's odes we have already quoted. Of the poems which this first volume contains, the following specimens are amongst the most beautiful:

TO A FRIEND ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

(*An—als Ihm die—starb.*)

The sower soweth the seed,  
The earth receives it, and we wait a little,  
And then the flower appears.—

Thou lovedst her: Whatever else of profit  
This life had for thee thou didst lightly value,  
And from thee she passed away!

Why weepest thou beside her sepulchre?  
Why raisest thou thy hands up towards the cloud  
Of Death, and of corruption?

Men are like grass that groweth in the field,  
And like the leaves pass hence! Few days, and we  
In disguise shall wander on!

The eagle may visit earth's regions,  
Yet dwells not, but shakes from its pinions the dust,  
And then turns sunward again! ‡

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\* Friend Hain represents Death, and it is to him that *Asmus* is dedicated. A rude frontispiece representing this personage, in the form of a skeleton holding a scythe, is one of the peculiarities of the volume.

† Werke. Th. 1, 2. S. 46.

‡ Werke. Th. 1, 2. S. 19.

## SPRING.—THE FIRST MAY MORNING.

To-day will I merry, merry be,  
 With form and philosophy do away,  
 Tumble about and shout in glee—  
 And even the king shall not say Nay.

Forth it comes from the rosy bowers  
 Of morning, and hosts of pleasures brings;  
 Gleaming with garlands and wreaths of flowers,  
 While on its shoulders the nightingale sings.

Red and white is its visage now,  
 Dew-drops and fragrance and blessing attend—  
 Ha! be my thyrsus a budding bough,  
 And thus I'll leap forward to meet my friend.\*

## AT THE GRAVE OF MY FATHER.†

Around this tomb-stone peace may there be!  
 The sweet calm peace of God! Alas, here lies  
 A man of right good qualities;  
 And more was he to me.

Blessings upon me, like the mild ray  
 Of star from worlds of higher rank than ours!  
 Were shed by him in plenteous showers,  
 And ne'er can I repay.

He slept in death and they brought him here:  
 May that sweet solace which by God is given,  
 And foretaste of a life in Heaven,  
 Perfume these ashes dear!

Until him Jesus Christ in majesty  
 Shall lovingly awaken! Ah, here lies  
 A man of right good qualities;  
 And he was more to me.

The following remarks on Conversion must not be overlooked. It will be seen that Claudius *has* a text, but he

\* Werke. Th. 1, 2. S. 103.

† Werke. Th. 1, 2. S. 121.



does not announce it until he arrives nearly at the end of his little discourse:—

“Almost all the systems of *good* and *evil* that men make for themselves, are *ephemera*—children of the present condition, with which also they die away; and it rarely happens that a man remains true to a system under opposite circumstances. Hence, we may always wager ten to one that a delinquent, condemned to death, would express while in prison quite other sentiments respecting *good* and *evil* than those which he entertained before he came hither, and while he yet cruised about in the open sea. \* \* \* It is inconceivable, generally speaking, why people enter so diffusely into demonstration with freethinkers and doubters, and make so much ado about their scepticism and cavillings. Christ says quite briefly: ‘Whoso keepeth my word shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.’ He who has neither the ability nor the inclination to make the attempt, if he be a reasonable and just man, or only desirous of being esteemed reasonable and just, can never, properly speaking, say a word either against Christianity or in its favour; and if, notwithstanding this, he be so weak and vain that, like Voltaire, Hume, and others, he must needs bring his trinket-ware to market, the proper course to pursue is, to let him alone, and take no notice whatever of him.”\*

A translation into German of Pythagoras’s famous letter to Hiero of Syracuse appears in this volume. “Amateurs of the refined and great world,” writes Claudius, “may well remark upon the failings of the author of this letter, and declare that a philosopher of our century would have written in quite other terms.” We can fully understand with what pleasure our author, himself environed with poverty and subjected to temptation, would transcribe the magnificent independence of potentates, with all the wealth and luxury

\* Werke. Th. 1, 2. S. 60.

they could bestow, displayed in the lines of Pythagoras; how heartily he could endorse the assurance that "a temperate and frugal man can easily dispense with the tit-bits of Sicily;" and that "contentment is a great thing and stands fast; it has none to envy or persecute it, and therefore it seems to render us most like unto the gods. Neither by means of amorousness, nor through much eating and drinking, is a healthy constitution obtainable; but rather by means of want, which impels a man to virtue." And drawing consolation alike from the stars of far antiquity, and from those of the heavens above him, Claudius feels that there are worse things under the sun than poverty. "For ever fair" he writes, immediately following the above:—

"For ever fair and young the far-stretched sky;  
Beyond the moon all things for aye abide;  
The Pleiades, and the star-hosts on high,  
For ever in their glory onward ride  
Despising death: ne'er shall they pass away,—  
They bid defiance unto all decay." \*

Another note-worthy article in this volume was called forth by a dispute which broke out in Hamburg, between the parties already mentioned—Goeze, the strictly orthodox, and Alberti the more liberal and catholic, clergyman. It appears that the quarrel—for it actually came to this—was occasioned by the latter, together with a brother-clergyman, omitting from the church-service the words: "Pour out Thine indignation upon the heathen who have not known Thee, and upon the kingdoms that call not upon Thy name." Goeze immediately took up arms against Alberti; denounced him from the pulpit in neither a christian, nor a charitably tolerant spirit, and evinced the will to persecute with a zeal and bitterness worthy of the Inquisition. These contentions had gone on for some months when Claudius published

\* Werke. Th. 1, 2. S. 67.

anonymously: "*A Disputation between Messrs. W. and X. and a Stranger, concerning Alberti's Heterodoxy, &c. &c.*"

It would interest us but little to follow the *pros* and *cons* which make up this "disputation." Claudius's endeavour is, to place the conduct of his friend Alberti in a true and proper light, and to preserve it from being misunderstood. As "the Stranger" he would act the part of a peace-maker, and, if it might be, reconcile those at issue. In the course of his remarks we meet with the following passages which we feel warranted in introducing here, inasmuch as their value extends to other times than those in which they were penned. "Truth," he writes, "is the daughter of the peaceful Heaven, and shuns contention and the tumult of the passions. But to him who can deny himself, and love her with undivided heart, she turns aside, visits him by night as he sleeps, and makes his face and his whole frame to rejoice." \* \* \* "The spirit of religion dwells not in the vessels of dogmatism, exists not in the children of unbelief, nor in the degenerate sons and whitewashed sepulchres of belief; is little to be extorted by luxuriant and brilliant leaps of reason, or by formal orthodoxy and monachism; and for children whose hearts are to be rendered better by religion, the simplest and most forcible expressions are surely the best. Standing by the Fountain why should I not drink of it? by so doing I am at least secured from the impurities of the bucket. Honour to the man, to the nation of men, zealous and strict for their religion; but it is nevertheless reasonable to investigate before displaying anger." \* \* "When we reach yonder world, when we enter the society of Heaven's radiant denizens, who are all of one mind and friends, how well it will be with us! and how we shall regret that we spent so much time here quarrelling, and perhaps acting unjustly in our strife."\*

\* Werke. Th. 1, 2. S. 70—80.

On the whole, this little volume contains much good and pleasant reading. Passing over the "Letters to the Moon," and other poetico-prose articles, we come at last to a "Letter to Andres," which closes these two parts of *Asmus*. Andres was an imaginary cousin of our author, and to him Claudius's most beautiful letters are addressed. The epistle in question fitly concludes the volume, and the latter clauses of it shall bring this chapter to a close:—

" \* \* \* Do not misunderstand me; we should not forget to do good and to communicate; our LORD JESUS CHRIST himself has told us this, and what He has said, Andres, I receive altogether implicitly.

"Perhaps thou hast read the Evangelists attentively, Andres? How *beneficent* and *judicious* is all that HE says and does! so unpretending and quiet that one scarcely credits it, and at the same time so exceeding great and glorious that we cannot comprehend it, but fall upon our knees. And what dost thou think of a land where His *glorious* doctrines should be in the heart of every man? Wouldst thou not gladly dwell in that land?

"I have sought out a bright and beautiful star in the sky, to regard it in thought as the abode of HIM and His disciples. From my heart I bless that star and worship it, and often as I walk at night, I look up thither and think of the RABBONI; and then my heart beats high, and so bold and supernatural an unrest comes over me that I often fancy myself intended for some better office than that of mere Messenger; but meanwhile I ever hold on my way, and soon discover again that it is my calling."

## CHAPTER II.

THE first volume of *Asmus* and Claudius's first child were born almost at the same time. The latter was his daughter Caroline, afterwards married to Perthes, the eminent Hamburg publisher. The year following brought him another daughter, whom he named Christiana.

The publication of his book rendered him but little pecuniary assistance. Every day poverty and want were gaining upon him, and an increasing family rendered it doubly necessary that he should bestir himself. To his friend Herder he accordingly made known his circumstances, and his desire to obtain suitable employment. Herder prosecuted the necessary search with characteristic ardour and kindness, somewhat indignant that a scholar of Claudius's attainments, and withal so good a man, should starve. A non-political secretaryship was what he wished for him—or indeed anything from this down to the situation of an ordinary writer.

Voss, whose poems and translations are known to every lover of German Literature, was attracted to Wandsbeck by Claudius, with whom he had recently become acquainted. Like Claudius, he too was dependent upon his pen for a livelihood, and was also connected with the Wandsbeck Messenger. This circumstance, and the proximity of his new residence to Hamburg, where he had many patrons, may have had additional weight with him in the choice of a home. Here in Wandsbeck, notwithstanding their scanty means,

the two poets spent many happy days in each other's society; and it is mainly from Voss that we get information relating to Claudius at this time: from his correspondence we catch a glimpse or two of the household at Wandsbeck. On one occasion he says:—"We spend the whole day with brother Claudius, lying generally on a piece of turf in the shade, and listening to the cuckoo and the nightingale. His wife, attired as a shepherdess, with hair loosely flowing, sits near us, their little daughter in her arms. We drink coffee or tea, smoke a pipe, and chat, or compose something, in a social way, for the *Messenger*." And again, in a letter to Ernestine Boje, whom he afterwards married:—"Claudius is a most excellent man, only Klopstock and Ehlers come near him. And his wife is just such as he deserves. When I sit with them of an evening at sunset, and the heart opens, I feel that uprightness and virtue still exist, and my resolution to become increasingly a better man grows more firm." Persons of note and influence were gradually being added to Claudius's list of friends—among others the Stolbergs—and many a little incident arose from his intercourse with so large a circle, which served to brighten the environment of need which surrounded him. His connection with the *Wandsbeck*, or, as it was now called, the *German Messenger*, ceased in the summer of 1775, and, the following autumn, he accompanied the Stolbergs to Berlin—there to seek employment; earning, in the mean time, a bare living by translating. The journey was comparatively fruitless, but help came unexpectedly from another quarter:—Herder had succeeded in procuring for him a private chancery-secretaryship (*Kanzleisecretärstelle*). Shortly afterwards, however, and before he had entered upon his new duties, the office assigned him was changed for that of an "*Oberland commissarius*,"—the emolument eight hundred gulden. Although hardly to his mind, necessity compelled him to accept this. He must leave Wandsbeck, too, and go to live at Darmstadt.

On the whole, he would rather not be a "great man" in the *official* sense of the word.

The old Claudius, meanwhile, had passed gently away, seventy years old; like a shock of corn, fully ripe. "He was a good man:" Claudius the son deeply mourned his loss. He died in the December of 1773.

Early in April, 1776, the Claudius family set out for Darmstadt, calling on their way at Bückeberg, where Herder at that time resided. Here they remained a week, and then went on to Göttingen. About the middle of April they reached Darmstadt, and were most kindly received by Herder's relatives there—to whom Claudius carried letters of introduction.

His new duties do not appear to have exactly met his wishes: in a very few months we find him partially liberated from them, and editor of the *Hessian Darmstadt privileged Country News* (*Hessendarmstädtischen privilegirten Landzeitung*) the organ of the *Land Commission*, with which he was officially connected. Amidst statistics, accidents and emergencies, births, deaths, and marriages, reports of crops, schools, colleges, and churches, notices of epidemics, social grievances, dialectic encounters, "projects for improving the condition of the working classes," essays, and treatises on—everything *cum multis aliis*, the Wandsbeck Messenger still contrived to keep his peculiar *Mission* before the eye of the public. In the third part of *Asmus* we meet with several short articles under the head of *Görgeliana* (*Görgel* being his *nom de plume* in the "Hessian Darmstadt News") which appeared in this journal, but they contain nothing of sufficient interest to notice here.

Darmstadt was not wanting either in natural beauties or in cultivated society. In the pine-wood depths just without the town, and where the little Darm-brook meandered through the neighbouring luxuriant meadows, Claudius loved to wander; it is said that his beautiful "Evening Song" was

composed here. With many men who have since won a name in literature, Moser, Merck—Goethe's friend, George Schlosser, Lessing, and others, he was in frequent intercourse. Yet Claudius was not comfortable at Darmstadt. That Cause into the service of which he had seriously enlisted, and which he loved with his whole heart, he could not, in his present position, aid and further as he desired; nor could he, without pain, behold those with whom he was thrown into contact, either ignoring it or treating it with contempt. For that Cause, however despised and rejected, had begun to exert its due influence upon him; nay, had long exerted it. The restraints of office were irksome, but light compared with the restraints which that office imposed upon his pen; and he seems to have felt that, come what might, if health and strength were afforded him, he could work more freely, more nobly for the world—altogether *better*—elsewhere.

From considerations of this kind, seconded by a severe attack of pleurisy which befell him early in 1777, he decided on resigning the office he then held. For a short time he was face to face with death; recovery, however, set in, and afforded him leisure to speculate upon what the future might have in store for him. Towards Wandsbeck his longings were directed, and to Herder's inquiry: "*What to do there?*" his answer was, "*Translate, continue Asmus, and 'Commit thou all thy ways.'*" Although rather annoyed at Claudius's resignation, Herder did not hesitate again to interest himself on his friend's behalf, and, at his solicitation, the expenses of the Claudius family to Wandsbeck were kindly defrayed by the Duchess Louisa of Saxe-Weimar. The way being thus far clear, they accordingly left Darmstadt in May—after having resided there for twelve months—and in due time reached Wandsbeck, where he was received by Voss, who had lately married, and, with his wife, was enjoying the retreat which the little country town afforded. Claudius's arrival occasioned much surprise: the people could not



possibly conceive how he came thus to renounce worldly prosperity in favour of what they deemed the inevitable recurrence of his former poverty.

Herbst ascribes considerable importance to Claudius's sojourn at Darmstadt and to the circumstances in which he was there placed. The narrow escape from death—although death was an enemy that he did not greatly fear—deeply impressed him. "Outward prospects of life had been wrecked amid humiliations; before him was gloom, yet illumined by the light of a child-like faith which strives after the kingdom of God, assured that all else will follow. He had given early testimony of what actuated him—of the fundamental impulse of his life—and this impulse was ever *more than words and truer than poetry*; but now it became more his own, more a thing of experience, more certain. Had this impulse—no creation of his, and over which, therefore, he possessed no power—had it, in former days, amidst thoughts and impressions foreign to him, been the cause of occasional *disquiet*, now, as it advanced to the mastery, it began to afford him *peace of mind*, nay, it was itself his *rest*.

"Above all things his mind became freer, and more cleared of those extraneous appendages which the spirit of the age and manifold intercourse therewith had supplied. He had gazed upon literature in its most brilliant phases and most diversified tendencies; he could value what was genuine and great, and had also sung—not without effect or renown—on the German Parnassus; even now he did not lay aside the lyre. But he discovered that its sounds must be adapted otherwise than to the views, ideas, and humours of those musicians, who at that time sung themselves and their own natures.

"This, therefore, is the period when Claudius's decisive separation from his former colleagues in German literature takes place; henceforward he pursues his own solitary way. The man, in other respects so wanting in action, by thus

making a breach with all which was then exalted and deified by his countrymen, has done a deed of great ethic import, and to which a more than ordinary measure of courage and decision belonged." \*

From this epoch in Claudius's biography, up to the end of his life, the meagreness of detail is more apparent. It is a common and oft-repeated saying, that the lives of literary men are generally wanting in incident; the case of Claudius fully confirms its truth. Arrived at Wandsbeck, he entered with determination upon the course of toil and want, to which nearly every man is doomed who, without private resources, pursues literature for a livelihood. Here it was that, with this prospect before him, he settled down calmly to inculcate unpopular religious truths; and to do this moreover, although kindly and without the harshness of bigotry, yet plainly and uncompromisingly.

From the pen of Ernestine Voss we gain the following little sketch of proceedings at Wandsbeck. "Very frequently," she writes, "we visited Claudius's mother-in-law, who kept a boarding-house for honest burgher-families, and, together with her two unmarried daughters, knew how to entertain her guests cheerfully. In the large garden belonging to the house there were two bowling-greens, one of which we appropriated. Claudius was the president of this society, and without his permission no one was admitted. Besides the Wandsbeck circle, single gentlemen of Hamburg were also received. The ladies of Wandsbeck had free access, and when they played at bowls they were given so many beforehand. Every luxury was rigorously prohibited, not even tea or coffee being allowed, but merely Kaltenhöf beer, to Claudius an ideal, and pure spring water, in addition to bread and butter, or cheese, or cold meat." This was Claudius's recreation; his work consisted of translating, and preparing

\* Herbst: Matthias Claudius. S. 130.

another volume of *Asmus*. How he managed to provide bread for his family does not clearly appear, but certain it is that in the very midst of poverty he had the heart to laugh at it.

The third part of *Asmus* appeared in 1778, adorned with a frontispiece representing Claudius's illness of the previous year—Death with his scythe bending over the sick man. "When he gains the bedside," says Claudius, "it is a very grave spectacle for the occupant of the bed."

Critical fragments and poetry, as in the previous volume, constitute the greater part of the book. There are also some articles, entitled "*Görgeliana*"—containing nothing remarkable. The longest and perhaps most important piece is called: "*Narrative of my Audience with the Emperor of Japan*."\* Claudius and an imaginary cousin take a trip, also imaginary, to Japan, are announced there as great European scholars, and ushered into the august presence of his Highness the Emperor, by whom they are most graciously received. The conversation at court is long and interesting. After a while it turns upon poetry, and they cannot agree quite as to what poetry and poets are. Claudius, when asked what he understands by poets, replies that he looks upon them "as pure, bright flints, from which the beautiful sky and earth and a divine religion strike sparks." The Emperor of course has no notions of this kind; nevertheless, he somewhat falls in with the idea. They then talk of philosophy, and the Chan desires to know something about—Herr Lessing; asking "whether *he* belongs to the bench of philosophers?" "I would advise your Majesty," says Claudius, "to give him a seat all to himself. The ordinary benches do not suit him, or rather he does not suit them."

In the course of the interview *Asmus* (Claudius) produces a skull. The part of the conversation which this incident gives rise to is of considerable interest. It affords

\* Werke. Th. 3. S. 44.

at least a glance into Claudius's views respecting kingship:—

“THE CHAN. ‘What have you there, Sir Asmus?’

“ASMUS. ‘A man's skull, dear Emperor; the lower jaw is wanting, otherwise it is entire. We found it on our way, and intend to bury it when we reach home, that at least it may rest now. The poor fellow had a vexatious enough time of it while he lived.’

“THE CHAN. ‘The sight makes me shudder.’

“ASMUS. ‘It does not me. I have never injured him.’

“THE CHAN. ‘Who was he, Albiboghoi? \*—and do any of his friends yet live?’

“ASMUS. ‘He was a man, dear Emperor! and his life and temporal happiness were intrusted to thee. Every Japanese is his brother, every Siamese and Chinese, every Malay and Mogul,—and we Europeans also. I thank thee, in the name of the Europeans, for all the kindness and goodness thou hast shown him. He is dead now, and if he has been a virtuous and good man he is better off than we. But all of us must die. \* \* \* Yes, dear Emperor, all men are brethren. God has made every man, one as another, and He gave them this world to rejoice in—to love each other and to be happy in. But they could not agree, and on all sides they treated each other with injustice, and grieved each other; then God selected the best and noblest among them,—those who were humble, wise, just, pure-in-heart, kind, gentle, and compassionate, and ordained them as Fathers of the rest. These are the Princes, the Emperors, and the Kings.’”

The Chan expresses his approbation, and *Asmus* proceeds:—

“‘A good prince fears God, and implores wisdom from on high to enable him to rule well; and then God grants him

\* The Marshal of the Court.

wisdom, and anoints his heart with high and heavenly thoughts, and then he can do all things. — Heeding no trouble, he forgets himself and his own weal wholly and entirely, and lives and acts for his People alone.'

"THE CHAN. 'What does a prince gain by being a prince, then?'

"ASMUS. 'Ask the sun what it gains by travelling round the earth night and day. And lo! it performs its course joyously as a bridegroom, and from its rising to its setting it showers down blessings. He who has appointed it that course will take care to reward it. Fancy, dear Emperor, a wide territory whose every cottage is occupied by contented inmates; people who love their prince, mention his name at morning and evening prayer, and could gladly give up life for his sake—wouldst thou not be that prince? And this is but a small part of the reward. A good prince is not—*cannot* be—rewarded at the hands of man; he sits at table with the gods.'

"THE CHAN. 'Are all the princes such in Europe?'

"ASMUS. 'Emperor, I am too upright to say what is false, I do not know. But those who *are* such, enjoy sweet sleep, and are well pleasing both to heaven and to earth.'

"THE CHAN. 'You are indeed right, Sir Asmus. It must be a satisfaction to have acted with justice and well towards one's subjects, and to receive the thanks of everybody one meets. So then a skull may be better regarded. I had almost even pleasure—'

"ASMUS. 'God bless and direct thee, Emperor. Thou wilt certainly render thyself the happiest man in thy whole kingdom. And remember me, dear Prince, when one day thou canst lay thee down in the mausoleum of thy kingdom as calmly and cheerfully as a father, in the early morning, in the sleeping-room of his children, while yet the little ones are in bed and asleep.' "

The Chan is tolerably acquiescent, and his visitor,

whom he requests to proceed, concludes his appeal thus:—

“‘Let not flatterers mislead thee, dear Emperor;—believe them not. They do not tell thee the truth, but that which thou mightest like to hear—and it would tarnish thy fair crown, wert thou ever to dishonour it by injustice. Look around thee, dear Emperor, and shouldest thou find a man in thy kingdom, who invariably speaks truth to thee, even when thou dost not hear it gladly, that man is the right one,—choose him for thy friend and greatly honour him, for he is worthy of thy honour, and he esteems and loves thee more than they all.’” \*

Such were Claudius’s ideas touching the duty of a monarch towards his people: concerning that of the people to their rulers, he writes subsequently. “*The Lord’s Prayer*,” is the subject of a short treatise in the present volume, which, however, we shall omit, as the same theme suggests broader and more matured reflections to our author, at a much later date.† Speaking of Herder’s “*Sermons*” Claudius styles his friend “a Preacher alive to the dignity of his calling; one who stands not upon ceremony and compliments, but utters winged sentences with the noble frankness of a man conscious of his worth and good cause, and whom truth emboldens.” ‡

The famous Rheinweinlied, “*Song of the Rhine-wine*,” so admired in Germany, occurs in this volume. It is not very bacchanalian, nor indeed very interesting: its widespread popularity, however, proves it to possess a peculiar charm, although, indeed, some may be unable to discover precisely in what it consists. It forms no part of Claudius’s *Message*.

The following article will commend itself to most readers: it concludes the present volume, and, although neither

\* Werke. Th. 3. S. 63. † Werke. Th. 8. S. 56.

‡ Werke. Th. 3. S. 74.

elaborate nor showy, possesses some attraction. It deals with matters of vital importance—higher than Claudius has hitherto handled. Its object perhaps is not so much to carry conviction to the mind, as to prepare the way for conviction. Starting by distinguishing Philosophy from Revelation, it passes on to lay down the limits of reason, to discover where the domain of reason ends, and where that of faith begins. It is entitled :—

“A CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN ME  
AND MY COUSIN RESPECTING  
ORTHODOXY, AND  
IMPROVEMENT IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS.”

The first letter is from Claudius (*Æmus*) to his cousin, and runs thus :—

“ For some time I have heard so much of biblical religion and of reasonable religion, of theologians orthodox and theologians philosophic, that my head gets confused, and I can no longer decide who is right and who is wrong. To improve upon religion by means of human reason, certainly appears to me much the same as attempting to regulate the sun by my old wooden house-clock ; on the other hand, however, philosophy seems to be a good thing also, and much that the orthodox have rejected has the appearance of truth. My cousin would do me a real favour by distinguishing these matters. Especially whether he regards philosophy as a broom wherewith to cleanse the temple of its defilements ; and to whether of the two I must bow more profoundly—to an orthodox pastor or a philosophic one.”

Then comes the answer :—

“ Philosophy is good, dear cousin, and those who so utterly scorn it are in the wrong ; but the relation of Revelation to Philosophy is not as that of Much and Little, but as that of Heaven and Earth, of Above and Below. I cannot make it plainer to you than by reminding you of the chart that you

once drew of the pond at the back of your late father's garden. You used to like to course over that pond, and with your own hand you made a map of all its depths and shallows, regulated your steering accordingly, and all went on well. But had a whirlwind, or the Queen of Otaheite, or a waterspout, lifted you up, together with your boat and chart, and deposited you upon the ocean, cousin, and you had wished here, too, to order your course according to the pond chart, it would never have done. The fault is not in the chart—it availed for the pond, but the pond is not the ocean, you see. Here you would have had to construct quite another chart—one, indeed that must have remained pretty blank, seeing that the sand-banks lie *very* deep. And you may ever steer straight ahead here, cousin; possibly you will run upon some ocean-marvel, but you will not run aground.

“From what has been already said, you may now judge to what extent Philosophy is a broom wherewith to sweep the cobwebs from the temple. In a manner it may be such a broom; yes, it may be termed also a hare-foot, useful for removing the dust from the sacred statues. But he who would cut and carve at the statues themselves with it, requires more of the hare-foot than it can perform; and to do this should be regarded as highly ludicrous and vexatious. Paul, a man of large experience in the world, one who had been a Sadducee and *fort esprit*, and was afterwards taught of another, one who, with all his enthusiasm for the new system, *Christianity*, yet in his Epistle to the Romans employs and understands dialectics as well as any man; this old-experienced apostle declares that ‘the peace of God passeth understanding,’ and on this he lives his old days in much labour and peril, and suffers for it the infliction, five times, of forty lashes save one, and so a flippant novice (*Gelbschnabel*) will reason.

“That Christianity is to debase all that is *lofty*, and not, like virtue, to attemper and lead into the proper channels



whatever is *beautiful* and has a *form of its own*, but rather, like decay, *entirely* to remove it in order that something new may spring up therefrom—Reason will not, certainly, agree to this; nor ought it, were it even true. When Abraham was commanded to leave his own country, his kindred, and his father's house, and to journey into a land which should be shown him for the first time—do you not think that his natural feeling struggled against such a command, and that his reason would have summoned up variously-grounded scruples and important doubts respecting it. But Abraham believed the word spoken unto him, and set out. And there neither is nor was any other way; for from Haran he could not see the Promised Land, and *Niebuhr's Travels* were not at that time published. Had Abraham talked the matter over with his reason, he would certainly have remained in *his own country* and *among his kindred*, resting satisfied there. The Promised Land would have lost nothing had this been the case, but Abraham would not have entered it. See, cousin, so it is, and thus stands it in the Bible.

“As, therefore, the sacred statues cannot be restored by human reason, it is patriotic, in a high sense of the word, to retain the old form unviolated, and to abide implicitly by a tittle of the law. And if acting thus constitutes an *orthodox* pastor, you cannot bend too profoundly before him. But the name ‘orthodox’ is otherwise applied.

“And now, dear cousin, farewell! follow after peace, and, for the rest, trouble not yourself about the struggle and the war-cry, and use religion more wisely than they.—Potiphar's wife rises before my eyes! You remember Potiphar? This *sanguinary* and *rheumatic* woman seized hold of Joseph's mantle, and he *fled*. Upon the *point saillant*, upon the spirit of religion, we must not dispute, because, according to the Bible, no one knows this spirit but he to whom it is imparted, and then there is no time for doubting and disputing.

"In short, cousin, Truth is a giant that lies by the way-side asleep; the passers-by see indeed his gigantic form, but they cannot see him, and vainly do they bring the finger of their vanity to the nose of their reason. When he removes the covering that hides him, you will look upon his countenance. Until then our consolation must be, that he is actually under the covering, and, dear cousin, do you pass by reverently and with trembling, *cavilling* not."\*

Claudius's family was his element. Amongst his children he lived—there he thought and wrote. Their number was increasing, but his "darling wish"—a boy, remained as yet ungratified. Three girls he owned already, and the year following the publication of his third volume, another arrived. "Thou canst not credit, Andres," he writes, "what a festival it is for me when they bring me a new child, and, the affair happily over, I have it in my arms. \* \* \* 'Here thou art, then, dear little one!' I say to it, 'here thou art! welcome to us! Thy fate in this world stands not written in the stars, and I know not how things will go with thee, but I thank God that thou art here, and for the rest the Father in heaven may provide.'" In May, 1781, a fourth girl was added to the number, and caused a revolution in the household arrangements. A more spacious dwelling-house was now absolutely necessary, and accordingly he borrowed a sum of money for the purchase of it. The new abode proved almost all that could be desired, good gardens, pasture-lands, and plenty of fresh air being its accompaniments. Here in 1783 a son was born to him—Johannes—perhaps named after Claudius's *favourite Disciple*.

The same year was also marked by a visit Herder paid him, and by the publication of another volume of *Asmus*.

If the import of the preceding volume had undergone a material change towards its end, if the jocose and humouristic element had been superseded by manifestations of an

\* Werke. Th. 3. S. 106.

earnest *mysticism*, as it was called, a religious sense, and for the most part at variance with all that was intellectual at that time in Germany—the new volume of *Asmus* showed a still more decided expression of the same sentiments, and couched in plainer and simpler terms. Its appearance was the signal to several for the withdrawal of countenance and friendship from Claudius, as well as for attacks upon him, and utterances of scorn at the bent his mind and pen had taken. Voss was among the first to pronounce judgment and speak harshly on this subject. “Claudius,” he wrote to Miller (1785), “is sinking deeper and deeper into the bottomless morass which he fancies is a paradise.” Goethe, in former days, had recognized the merit of Claudius as a poet, and had pronounced some of the Wandsbeck poems “very excellent,” but now these two travelled different paths, and Goethe frowned upon and pitied that of Claudius. It is needless to enumerate the instances in which the example of those leaders of German literature was followed. The mutual regard which had so long existed between Herder and Claudius grew cooler, although it was never entirely destroyed.

The principal articles of interest in the fourth volume of *Asmus* now before us, are: *Paul Erdmann's Festival*; the *Evening Song*; *Remarks upon some sayings of Solomon the Preacher*; and five excellent *Letters to Andres*. *Paul Erdmann's Festival* intends, says Herbst, “to portray the blessings, temporal and spiritual, attendant upon a community of men holding a common creed.” The same author regards it as decidedly inferior to Zschokke's *Tales of Village Life*: it is wanting in “poetical invention” and “has a quite realistic tendency.” It contains much homely wisdom coupled with natural simplicity. The other pieces above mentioned are as follow:—

## EVENING SONG.

The moon is risen on high,  
And in the clear blue sky  
The golden stars are shining bright.  
The woods are dark and still,  
And every field and hill  
The mists o'erwrap with robe of white.

The world hath now no sound,  
Twilight is all around,  
So beautiful, so welcome met !  
Some quiet room, as 't were,  
In which the past day's care  
To banish, and in sleep forget.

See ye the moon on high ?  
Only a part ye spy,  
And yet yon moon is round and fair !  
Much is there we deride,  
Calm and self-satisfied,  
Because our eyes have seen it ne'er.

We, the proud sons of men,  
Are sinners poor and vain,  
Little indeed it is we know ;  
Castles we build in air,  
Arts ply we with much care,  
Yet from our aim aye further go.

Lord, Thy salvation show !  
Nought would we trust below,  
Would not that trifles us delight !  
Give us simplicity,  
As children would we be,—  
Walk, pure and joyous, in Thy sight.

\* \* \*

And when at last shall come  
The time to leave our home,  
Thou wilt a peaceful end afford !  
Then be there to us given  
A' Home with Thee in Heaven,  
O Thou our Father and our Lord !

Rest, then, each weary frame,  
Rest, Brothers, in God's name !  
Chill is the evening-breeze, and cold :  
From chastisement, Lord, keep !  
O send us quiet sleep !  
Nor from the sick this boon withhold ! \*

#### ON SOME SAYINGS OF SOLOMON, THE PREACHER.

To my Subscribers.

Be seated, dear sirs, and make yourselves at home.

The first saying shall be that fashionable one, known and current throughout the world : ALL IS VANITY.

When a notorious word-monger, who delights in gathering sentences around him, or a projector whose scheme has ended vainly, or an old fool whom sin has left in the lurch—when such declare that all is vanity—why then the very sense of the proverb is also vain. But in the case of Solomon it is somewhat different.

Picture to yourselves a man, as you know Solomon to have been, of manifold gifts and graces, who gave himself up to seeking and searching wisely into all that is done under heaven ; who had in his own hands the means of procuring whatever seems good unto man, or only partially good ; of trying and testing all ; and who, according to his own confession, had actually tried and tested all ; now when such a man says uprightly and without affectation : I have done this thing and that thing, “ have builded me houses, planted me vineyards, made me gardens and orchards, and planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits, have had servants and maidens, gathered also silver and gold, got men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, and withheld

\* Werke. Th. 4. S. 51.

not my heart from any joy, &c., but behold, all was vanity," why then, this saying of his ought to make a proper impression upon us. And it seems to me that it might save us a good deal of trouble.

For instance. Thou wouldst so like to be this and that—chief butler or chief baker—and over this desire thou spendest thy whole life in anxiety and disgust. My dear sir! Solomon was more than chief butler and chief baker; he was king of Israel, of the most remarkable nation upon earth, and yet this did not help him. How shouldst thou, therefore, be helped? Be joyous, and have patience, and leave it to others to be chief bakers. So also thou wishest that this or that were thine—perhaps a landed estate, or a mahogany table, for great or little it is all the same. Thou wishest for a mahogany table, then, canst not sleep for wishing, but art thinking and bothering thyself about it, fancying that if thou only hadst the table thou wouldst be happy. My dear sir! Solomon had tables of solid mahogany, lamp-work, corner-cupboards, chests of drawers, floors and stairs, all were of mahogany, and he says: All the beautiful mahogany avails not; what, then, could a single table avail? Be joyous therefore at thy board of nut-tree or deal, and make not thy life a burden to thee.

To be joyous, says Solomon in various places, is the best thing for a man in this world. It must be understood, however, that thou do not get the mahogany table on the post of chief baker, not else; for when children have what they desire they do not cry. Thou art to be joyous "in all thy labour," and this, Solomon says, is a gift of God.

There are two methods of preserving a balance of our credit and debit, one by increasing our receipts, the other by lessening our expenditure. The latter method is beneficial, and cannot be sufficiently recommended to financiers, small and great. There are also two ways of maintaining a balance in the heart; first, when we have all that

we wish for, and second, when we desire no more than we possess. The former is troublesome and uncertain, the latter has been tested and is in the hands of every man.

But the mahogany table and the chief baker hover so sweetly before the eyes!

Now that is not their fault, but thine. In Solomon's case thou seest that they might otherwise be regarded, and thine own experience must have convinced thee in a hundred instances already that the lapse of time alters much.

The Emperor Charles the Fifth here presents himself to my mind. As is well known, he was a mighty monarch, who did not esteem his greatness as vain, but sought to assert it, and really did assert it, too, by many wars and victories. All at once, things not going on just as he wished, and his health giving-way, it seemed to him that all was vanity. He laid aside his two crowns, and entered a cloister at Estremadura. Here he assiduously fostered thoughts of death, and practised religious exercises, making watches between times for his amusement and diversion. Soon, this employment could no longer please him, and he would think of, hear of, and see nothingsave death. At last he went so far as to have the funeral rites performed over his living body. The Emperor Charles the Fifth, drest as a corpse, lay down in the coffin; on either side stood his courtiers, bearing lighted tapers, while the priests went through the service and prayed for his departed soul, he in the coffin fervently joining them. He died in reality not long after.

Death is a singular personage. He divests the things of this world of their rainbow-garb, opens the eyes to tears, and sobers the heart. Certainly we may be confused and too much disturbed by him, and this is generally the case when, up to the time of his arrival, we have allowed ourselves to be *too little disturbed* by him. But he is a singular personage, and an excellent *Professor of Morals*. And we should

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profit much were we to do all our deeds as if before his chair, and under his eyes.

And now for the second saying of Solomon : A TIME FOR EVERYTHING.

To be sure everything has its season, seed-time is not harvest-time, the time of new moon is not that of full moon, and certainly the period of a man's death is not that of his birth. But one of us may well suggest that this cannot have been Solomon's meaning. If the complete sense of the proverb were—that all things are not to be done at all times, but each at the time appointed to it, by nature or art, circumstances being ripe for it—it would be yet of so general a nature as to be too insignificant for our friend Solomon. And we need not abide by it, either, for the words have a large acceptance, as regards both the head and the heart.

For example. Man is fashioned in nine months under the heart of his mother, lives seventy years, and then returns to the earth whence he was taken. We observe such fixed periods in several known operations of nature, and it may be that all the others, those unknown to us, possess them also—greater and smaller, even up to collective nature herself; from the *In the Beginning* when God created Heaven and Earth, to the hour in which the elements shall melt away, and God will roll up the heavens as a garment. Now should man or angel just know all this, and not wish to say confidently that there is a time for everything, but merely to hint at the fact—why there is then a meaning in the expression, and we quickly and reverently look round after him who uttered it. Or: we men race and run on and ever on from our mother's womb, ignorant of what ministers unto our peace. Now just imagine a man who has found what thus ministers. When he regards men, his brethren, around him, with their perversities; when he sees them persevering in this and that error which has deluded and brought to shame thousands and thousands before them, and finds them un-



willing to listen to good counsel; when the well-disposed man, beholding these things, would gladly check the disorder, but cannot, and then consoles himself with our proverb,—in this case the words are like gold, and may perhaps be thus rendered: “How are men deluded, the fair and noble creatures of God, and destined to so much greater honour! How different might it have been had they themselves desired it! But the hour of their delusion will pass away, so that help may even yet be rendered them. There is a time for everything.”

Indeed, all things taken into account, Solomon appears to have intended neither the one meaning nor the other, but a third, namely: that in corporeal nature things do not happen as in the spirit-world, suddenly and simultaneously, but each has its time; and whoever is in corporeal nature must accommodate himself to this law, and do as well as he can under the circumstances. As if a man would drive his carriage to Königsburg, he is not instantaneously there, but the wheels of the vehicle must go round before he reaches his destination, and each of these revolutions has its time; for the second cannot happen until the first is completed, and so on, and then on it goes, often over stock and stone, and the driver sees well that he must wait and have patience, for there is truly nothing else to be done.

This meaning has something very sad in it; I know not whether it appears thus to my subscribers also.

The third saying is: **LET US HEAR THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER; FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, FOR THIS IS THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN.**

This saying stands at the end of all the rest in Solomon's little book—like the Morning Star—the last to rise, and lovelier and more glorious than all the stars that have preceded it. A conclusion usually stands at the end, and therefore its position here is natural. Perhaps, however, there may be a secondary design in it. Elsewhere Solomon re-

marks that even a fool does not believe the words of a man that spring not from his heart. Now, there are people who slander everything that they are unable to comprehend,—deeming themselves too wise to believe, but who are too stupid to know; poor creatures who deprive themselves of the advantages which both parties possess, their only gain being the privilege of *discoursing* all their lives, in order that persons still more stupid than themselves may look upon them as great intellects. This class of men has been in the world from the beginning, and will have representatives there for all time. Perhaps it was to them that Solomon referred; perhaps he wished to bring before their hearts the great doctrine, that the fear of God must be the source of every good. But he knew that, unpioneered, this his saying would meet with little faith among them. Hence, he prefaces it with divers sentiments and doctrines that are more in their way; and after having shown himself a master in their own art, and as such gained their confidence, he brings forward the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all men. There are many things, he would say, many doctrines between heaven and earth, well worth being thankful for, and which, in more than one respect, make great men of those who participate in them; but the One and All, the thing itself, the sum-total of all doctrines, is the FEAR OF GOD, and while it is the duty of every man to act according to this, it is also his element, his calling, his nature, and his existence.

My dear sirs! I am not what Solomon was, I am not king of Israel, and I gladly admit that his wisdom is still further from me than his crown; but I have a lively conviction that here we must begin and here end, and that all which is not based upon, and preserved by, the Fear of God, however great it may appear, is yet nothing but delusion and fallacy, and utterly incapable of furthering our well-being.

But this expression—Fear of God—has two meanings;

and here lies the knot which renders this teaching ambiguous and enigmatical. All of us fear God, speak reverently of Him, and with reverence hear Him spoken of, and so forth; we wish to fear Him, and on this or that opportunity we make His fear into constraint, and, for the rest, things go on as usual (*und übriges bleibt beim Alten*). Such a fear of God may pass for a refined outward discipline; but, beyond that, it is only as the servant behind the coach. He stands there in token that there are honest people within, to signal to the guards, open and shut the coach-door, &c.; and for the rest the animals in front pursue their steady trot or wild gallop where they will, and he behind must go with them, without his leave being asked. If the proprietor be graciously inclined, he may perhaps let him get inside when it rains.

What can such a fear of God as this effect? What kind of results can it have, and how could it be the sum-total of all doctrine?

Such is not the fear of God that our forefathers had, and which is held up to us in the Scriptures as a pattern. With them the Fear of God was not as the servant behind the coach—it was at the same time proprietor and driver. To them nothing was so heartfelt and divine as it; nothing so distasteful as to leave undone for it, nothing too sweet to sacrifice on its account. Joseph tears himself from the arms of a beautiful woman, leaving his mantle behind, because he could not commit so great a wickedness and sin against God. Abraham was offering up his only son, and not troubling himself about his paternal heart and his reason, when God spoke to him; and so it must be if anything is to come of it. And thou who wouldst calumniate the fear of God, be thou able to do as he; then come and calumniate, and we will believe thee. But else, thou art only a poor silly fellow (*Faselhans*),—ignorant of what thou talkest about, and welcome either to praise or to blame.

The veritable fear of God must be felt within us, must be

a truth there; for it is beneficent in its influences, and wondrous in its operations—more so, and in a different manner, than we suppose or comprehend.

Now, if we have merely this conception of God in our imagination:—that, as the Bible teaches us, He is the Creator and Sustainer of the visible and invisible world, the First and the Last, having Heaven for His throne and Earth for His footstool; that He is in all and through all, present and near to every being, from the depths of ocean to the heights of Heaven; that His powerful hand upholds; that, day and night, though we see it not, His eyes are open upon all His creatures, and especially man; are above and around us also; if having this conception merely in the imagination, it passes through us coolly, yet makes us love and fear God—what would be its effect were it to become a feeling and a truth within our hearts?

When this is the case we shall no longer wish to fear God, but we shall really fear Him, with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; in all our doings and omissions, when we rise and when we retire to rest, at noon and at midnight, whether sleeping or waking, we shall bear within us the image of the Best of all Beings—the Wisest, Most-Just, Most-True, and Most-Merciful of all,—and shall be transformed in the same image from glory unto glory. The keeping God's commandments will then be our joy and our happiness at the same time; for what are those commandments other than a hand by the way-side, marks in black and white to warn us of danger, and point out the safest passage into the Land of Healing? \*

\* Werke. Th. 4. S. 87.

## LETTERS TO ANDRES.

## LETTER I.

So thou wouldest like to know more of our Lord Jesus Christ—Andres ! who indeed would not ?

But thou art mistaken in coming to me. I am no friend to the new opinions, and hold firmly to the Word. Much do I hate speculating in the mysteries of religion ; for I think that they are just mysteries, which are not to be made known to us until the proper time.

If we cannot ourselves see Him, Andres, we must believe those who have seen Him. To me nothing else remains.

What is written of Him in the Bible, all the glorious sayings and glorious narratives there, are indeed not *He*, but only witnesses of Him—little bells on His robe ; nevertheless, they are our best earthly possession, and truly gladden and console him who hears and sees that man may become other and better than at present he is.

And what the Bible says of Him I have read more than once, and take it as it stands, without alteration. If thou wilt write and speak unto me of it thus, thus well can I do, and, *salvo meliori judicio*, heartily ! For myself, I know of nothing dearer and more gladdening than Help and Deliverance, and he to whom it is not so, ought never either to have been in trouble himself, or to have seen others in trouble. The woman, having found the lost piece of money, calls together her friends and neighbours, and says :—“ Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost.” And what kind of trouble is that from which money can free us !

Dost thou still remember our first voyage together—when

we tried the new boat, and I fell out of it into the water? I had already given up all hope, and was only thinking how death would seem to me, and what my poor mother would say—when I saw thine outstretched arm descend, and grasped it!—and I always see it now, Andres, whenever by mere chance I read thy name, and often when I meet with but a capital A. At bottom thine aid was only a palliative; for what, had it not been for thee, the water would have then done, the other elements will yet do, and thou canst not save me then. Yet I cannot forget that arm, and I believe that it has much to do with our intimate friendship. So is it here: distress teaches us to pray, and help and deliverance make us glad.

And now a Deliverer from all distress, from all harm! A Redeemer from evil! And now a Helper such as the Bible represents Christ to have been, who went about doing good, and Himself had not where to lay His head; around whom “the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead arise, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them;” He whom wind and sea obeyed, who suffered little children to come unto Him, took them in His arms and blessed them; who was God and with God, and who might have experienced joy indeed, but that He thought of the wretched in prison, and, drest in the garb of misery, came to redeem them with His blood; who heeded neither trouble nor reproach, and was patient even to death upon the cross, that He might accomplish His work; who came into the world to bless it, and was slain and tortured there, and went out wearing a crown of thorns.

Andres, hast thou ever heard aught like this, and do not thy hands fall down? It is indeed a mystery, and we cannot conceive it; but it comes from God and from Heaven, for it bears the seal of Heaven, and overflows with the loving-kindness of God.

For *the mere idea* one might suffer one's self to be branded

and broken on the wheel, and he who can choose to laugh at and deride it must be crazed. The man whose heart is in the *right place* lies in the dust, rejoices, and worships.

Speak and write to me thus of this matter, my dear Andres—whatever thou wilt, and I will not remain an answer in thy debt.

POSTSCRIPT.

There are people, Andres, who would teach all things, and, Bible in hand, run after every high-flown and good-for-nothing fellow. But this should not be, and it is scandalous to observe, wherever the fault may lie. The Gospel of Christ, whereof none is worthy, may indeed be preached unto all men; but it is not to be thrown away, and he who will not treat it better than this, may leave it alone.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, too, speaks quite differently concerning discipleship. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying: This man began to build and was not able to finish. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." And in His instructions to the departing apostles: "Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till ye go thence;—and whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet."

And now I await thy further commands.

## LETTER II.

So I am to begin by explaining to thee the history of the tribute-penny. That I should explain anything to thee seems just as when of an evening I must needs preach from the arm-chair to my late father. Meanwhile, I am at thy service.

But, Andres, thou dealest with thy texts as at the marriage at Cana of Galilee, where the worse wine was first served. Certainly the Pharisees fare very badly here; but wherefore rejoice at this?—at bottom they must excite pity. Christ and the wisdom of this world are not equally matched; we know beforehand that the latter must always lose. The manner, indeed, in which our Lord chooses that they should lose is exceedingly valuable, and makes all good; and therefore I will even begin, and, as thou so lovest the narrative, will be somewhat more prolix than under other circumstances.

“Then the Pharisees went out and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk.”

In this counsel a project was decided on:—to get Him to say that tribute did not belong to the Emperor. Properly, the Pharisees were at enmity with the Emperor, and would not take the oath of allegiance to him; but they were still more at enmity with the King of Truth, because with Him they had still more to lose. So they accommodated themselves to circumstances and made alliance with the Emperor, in order, by means of the less enemy, to rid themselves of the greater. They wanted Christ to say that it was wrong to pay tribute to the Emperor, and they thought that if He only said so He would be lost, and they appear to have reckoned upon prompt justice being done with regard to matters financial.



But how to make Him say this? The sly foxes knew themselves, and were aware that a tub of water overflows more readily when set in motion. On this account they resolved further, by dint of simulated praise, and by the recognition, on their part, of His ability, previously to expand His heart, and to extol His truthfulness, straightforwardness, and non-respect of persons, before the people, so that He might be induced to give proof to the Emperor of these qualities.

All this was not, it is true, brought forward; but they had no better intention in withholding it, and therefore they sent their disciples, and said:—"Master, we know that Thou art true, and carest for no man: for Thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?" And the servants of Herod were to go with them, so that, when the witnesses came to be heard, there might be less prolixity; or as good friends who, in concert, might behold the victory, and help to circulate news of it. Yes, or No!—the Pharisees to win in either case. For, should Christ decide in favour of the tribute, and thus evade the chief project, He would offend the people, who paid tribute very unwillingly, and expected from the Messiah liberation from every foreign yoke.

The affair was very craftily planned, and, *ceteris paribus*, would ten chances to one have succeeded. Here, as we said, it failed.

"But He perceived their craftiness, and said unto them: Why tempt ye me?"

This was, verily, the frank straightforwardness which they had cunningly praised; but in another form than that of their expectations.

The Pharisees, indeed, were not mathematically certain of a good issue,—else they would have come themselves and not sent their disciples; meanwhile, they undoubtedly thought

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all would go well, and had also spoken, beyond a doubt, to their deputed disciples in no humble tone of their crafty plan and scheme ; while they privately flattered themselves that Christ would neither know anything at all of it, nor remark in their honest faces what lurked behind their question. Thou mayest imagine how they were astonished when our Lord began to speak—to answer, according to His custom, not the countenance, but the heart.

“ But He perceived their craftiness, and said unto them : Why tempt ye me ? Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it ? They answered and said : Cæsar’s. And He said unto them :—Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s.”

Andres, what a meaning there is in everything that proceeds from His mouth ! His words remind me of those boxes, each of which is contained in another. His answer may perhaps be thus explained : You have recognized the Emperor’s sovereignty and protection, you have his money in your purses ; you must therefore fall in with the accompanying conditions ! I know not what else the greatest statesman could have said. But Christ was more than a statesman.

“ Whose image and superscription are these ? ”

He spoke here to Pharisees who sat in Moses’ seat,—men who were certainly unable to afford elucidation either to themselves or to others ; but who, nevertheless, carried the Keys of Knowledge hanging to a large hook at their side, and prided themselves upon the letter of the law, as the only true expounders of it. On another occasion Christ rebuked this their blind pride—that they thought to have eternal life in the Scriptures, and yet knew not where to seek it. Here was a similar case. Such great expounders of the Mosaic law ought of course to understand what was meant by the image, and to what it belonged, for it was its principal doctrine. How then could they ask whether the tribute

belonged to the Emperor, seeing that his image stood upon it? God had made man in His own image; the Emperor also had had *his* image made; it was of silver and on the tribute-money. Moses and the Prophets had taught Israel the way to preserve themselves from a foreign yoke and from tribute-money, and this was:—by depending with the whole heart upon God their Prototype, by having none other gods beside Him, and so on.

“Whose image and superscription is this?”

Dost thou not feel its *fine* meaning? It was a corner cut away from their own coat, an arrow aimed at them from their own armoury!—yet only aimed.

These zealots in religion had nothing to ask respecting the image of God; but they *had* respecting the silver one of the Emperor. The tribute-money, its payment or non-payment, was at bottom a small and unimportant matter, and one which would determine nothing as to their happiness. Generally considered, the entire question concerning the justice and injustice of the tribute was a very absurd one; just as much so as the inquiry of an adulterer:—Is it right to pay the penalty set upon adultery? Thou seest the peculiar position of the Pharisees, and what occasion there was, and room on all sides, for a bitter answer; and God knows that it would not have been given here unmerited. But He was *too good* to be acrimonious. He was not come to have the last word, and to triumph over the arts of the Pharisees and the wise of this world, but to save and bless those artists—and to this end all His words and works were directed.

He said:—“Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s.”

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As our Lord Christ, so also were His words and works. *Within*: grace, truth, and eternal good; *without*: poor flesh and blood, and the form of a servant.

When He would awaken from death the dead daughter of Jairus, He said: The maiden *sleepeth*; and *taking her by the hand* as if she were really only sleeping, cried: "Maiden, *arise!*" and her spirit came again unto her.

When He would speak of that high and immeasurable bliss, the portion of His true followers, He said: "Whosoever keepeth my word, shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." So also here: "Render unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's."

How little of externals! And yet the words contained for them nothing less than the one and sole counsel—to come out of all their necessity; for beyond the restoration of God's image within them, all else were but broken cisterns.

But now more closely still, and man to man.

Little as the Pharisees believed and knew it, they were yet blind and miserable, lacking help. Hence, they also hoped, although with deficient judgment, for a Messiah, and taught the people to hope for one. He who stood before them and spoke with them was the great Redeemer who brought them this help, and who would gather in His arms both them and all the wandering sheep of the House of Israel! They misapprehended Him, and with questions about the image of the Emperor would entrap Him by craft and bring Him into trouble. And *He* . . . . forgives them, for they know not what they do, points to the help so near them, and opens unto them His arms.

"Render unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's."

This *is* answering! "Blessed the mother that has borne thee, and the breasts that thou hast sucked!"

And we still entertain our perverted views of money, of man, and of the Kingdom of God. What if we could look upon all these things with other eyes? Then first should we understand His answer, and its fulness of grace and truth.

See, Andres, thus He deals with the Pharisees. But if thou wilt observe how they deal with themselves, read amongst the other narratives that of the Man born blind, John, ch. ix., ver. 10—34 inclusive. I know well that the Bible is never far from thee ; still, it may be for once in the next room, and so I will transcribe for thee.

“ Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened ? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the Pool of Siloam, and wash : and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then they said unto him, Where is he ? He said, I know not. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the Sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed and do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles ? And there was a division among them. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes ? He said, He is a prophet. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind ? how then doth he now see ? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind : but by what means he now seeth, we know not ; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not : he is of age ; ask him ; he shall speak for himself. These *words* spake his parents, because they feared the Jews : for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age ; ask him. Then again called they the

man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner *or no*, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: *as for* this *fellow*, we know not from whence he is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and *yet* he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out."

Could they have prostituted themselves more monstrously? All that is wanting is, the appointing a commission of natural philosophers and physicians to investigate the fact and deliver up the result of their deliberations.

I add no word to the text; and, to tell the truth, it seems to me the best method to add nothing, for we should only spoil it.

## LETTER III.

Thou askest : which of the narratives in the Bible seem to me the most glorious ?

All, Andres, all ! . . . every word that has proceeded out of His mouth, every movement of His hand . . . the latches of His shoes are sacred to me.

When he says : "Peace be with you," we have to be learning all our life what the single word *Peace* from His mouth implies, nor shall we understand it, indeed, until we reach Heaven.

Andres, thou canst imagine that all which relates to Him, all that He has said and done, contains much of meaning and significance, and that we are too ignorant to judge of the glory of those narratives.

Meanwhile, however, as they thus stand, the impressions which they make upon our hearts are various, and I must say that I delight most in the passages where He speaks of Eternal Life, and of the Comforter whom He will send, where He opens the eyes of the blind, where He loves His own even to the end, and eats the Last Supper with them, and where he overcomes Death and the Devil.

Only think, Andres, the Devil, who is so powerful, and whose only pleasure consists in tormenting and making everything about him wretched, were no one over him, and he to have free course, what would become of the world and of us poor men ? Must it not rejoice us, then, that he has a Superior, and that this Superior is the very same who helped, restored to health, and offered salvation to all that came unto Him, one whose compassion knows no end ? And Death ! Death is indeed terrible, Andres, and the worm under the hedge bows before it, for it carries us all away. Now when thou seest that our Lord Christ awakened

at Nain a dead man who was being borne to the grave, and another at Bethany after having been buried four days, when thou hearest Him speak of Tabernacles of Peace where we shall see our *Anselmo* again, and where good and holy men of all ages and nations shall be gathered together, when thou hearest Him say that whosoever believeth in Him though he were dead shall yet live, do not these things delight thee, Andres, and dost thou not wish, from thy heart, to believe in him? But "Faith is not unto all men,"—is not thus at command, Andres. The apostles themselves who were with Him, and had seen and heard, "said unto the Lord: Increase our faith." I learn from the case of the Canaanitish woman, and from other instances, that we may know little and yet have great faith; and, from that of the Pharisees, that we may know much, and yet have no faith at all. Christ said to the Pharisees: "How can ye believe who receive not honour from one another?" and Paul speaks of "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith."

Hence, I mark diligently the narratives of which Faith is the subject, and observe the meaning of the speakers in order to learn—not what I must yet know that I may believe, but what I must yet forget, drive from my mind, and put away from me, in order that Faith may cleave to me aright.

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#### LETTER IV.

Certainly, Andres, there are those who deny the Devil, who, as Doctor Luther says: "have no Sin, no Flesh, no Devil, no World, no Death, no Danger, no Hell, that is, who believe in none of these things, although perhaps they are over head and ears in them."

All Nature and Religion suppose a Devil; Christ was



tempted of the Devil, cast out devils, and told His apostles that He had come to destroy the works of the Devil. And now the notion is started that there is no Devil! But indeed it requires no answer.

Thou speakest farther on of Miraculous Gifts and of the Holy Ghost, and sayest that these have ceased to be, because after the establishment of Christendom they were no longer necessary.

Of Miraculous Gifts I understand nothing—thou must apply to Theologians for information here. But I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of the Holy Spirit being unnecessary on the establishment of Christendom. It seems to me that the Holy Spirit is ever necessary, that when He is absent all is absent. In short, I believe simply, with the Christian Church, that neither of mine own reason nor of mine own strength can I believe in or attain unto Christ Jesus my Lord; that the Holy Spirit is indispensable to the amelioration of every individual man; and that without Him, there can be no amelioration at all, no life, and no salvation.

Without Him, Andres, we are again left to ourselves. And from thence went we out, in that, left to ourselves, we are able to do nothing, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, or who we may; for “in Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision,” neither bishop’s mitre nor doctor’s hat, nor Zwingli nor Luther; but, as St Paul says, “a new creature.”

Being born again is a mystery, as we see in the 3rd chapter of John, one which the Masters in Israel did not all of them know, and never once from *hearsay*.

## LETTER V.

His kingdom is not of this world! Therefore the Jews hated, and persecuted, and put Him to death. . . .

Let us not condemn, Andres!

What they did cries to Heaven, we will not speak of it.

Our Lord gives to no man the right of casting the first stone except he be without sin. And who is sinless?

We are not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world; we are to hate our own life and to lose it, and it shall be made right with us *spiritually*.

Let us not condemn, Andres.

Thou hast very justly and truly written, that we may love Him so warmly and cleave to Him with such wholeness of heart, because He is so thoroughly and surpassingly good; it is also very right and true that His human-form so wonderfully delights us. But that thou wouldst so love to be in the Holy Land!

It seems, indeed, Andres, as if a blessing still lingered about the ways He walked, upon the mountains on which He sat with His disciples; as if we might still find traces on Olivet of His nightly couch, and still on Tabor catch the rays of His Glory; as if a circle of angels still hung over the place where He saw the city and wept for it, the room where He instituted the Divine Supper, the hill where He was crucified and where He died—watching, and longing to gaze in upon the mystery; it seems, in short, as if our Lord were nearer us in the Holy Land. But we know that He has appeared upon earth once visibly, that all men might know that He *is*, and what they have to expect in Him; and we know that although unseen, He is about us on every side; and where He is, Andres, is the Promised Land.

Such feelings, however amiable and praiseworthy, may lead too far, and are not the thing itself.

To renounce uprightly ourselves and our depraved will, and to do *His* will—*this is the thing*, and there is salvation in nought else.\*

\* Werke. Th. 4. S. 119.

## CHAPTER III.

THIS, then, was Claudius's Profession of Faith, for the sake of which many who were once his friends could be called by this name no longer.

Yet, possessing *it*, one can readily believe that the friendship of those to whom it was obnoxious and an offence, was no very great *desideratum*. While he met such on common ground, and each, for the most part, looked upon things literary, philosophical, and religious, from the same point of view, or thought they did, such friendship was a very excellent and valuable matter. Now, however, circumstances had become altered; to Claudius old things had passed away and much had become new; he had tested this system and that system, examined this theory and the other theory—found here a principle, before regarded as trustworthy, valueless as a broken reed; and there *another* which, slightly as he had hitherto considered it, rose by degrees within him until it became the one fundamental principle of his life. That friendship of former days could hardly have been kept up consistently even had his friends of former days desired it, inasmuch as Christianity admits of no compromise, and one of the positions which Claudius most forcibly held was, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God, and that he, as a Christian, was to love neither the world, nor the things which are in the world. Its attractiveness, if not yet entirely lost, was greatly lessened. Others, however, gathered round him, proud of his friendship, who were scarcely less distinguished

in their peculiar walks than those who had separated themselves from him. Hamann, Jacobi, and Lavater, men of high gifts all, entered now into his circle—sympathized with his convictions generally, and admired his courage and firmness in thus openly avowing them—in thus renouncing a place on the Parnassus of Germany for the sake of the ignored and despised Christian Faith. He met Lavater once only, in 1773, but this sole interview brought about an intimacy which lost nothing by being carried on merely by a correspondence which lasted until Lavater died.

In 1785, Frederick of Denmark, then Regent, granted a pension of two hundred thalers annually to Claudius, who had dedicated to him a translation of *Ramsay's Travels of Cyrus*. Encouraged by the eye of favour with which this prince evidently regarded him, Claudius ventured to address to Frederick a request that he would bestow upon him some office or other, whereby the more certainly to guard against actual poverty. He does not care for a lucrative one—if it will only support his family, it is enough. In a few months a reply came: his request was granted, and he was appointed *First Revisor of the Silesian Holstein Bank* at Altona. In addition to this, the prince kindly permitted him still to reside in his beloved Wandsbeck. The duties of his post were by no means onerous; and although the salary was not large, it proved sufficient, inasmuch as those duties only slightly interfered with his literary labours.

A large family was now gathering round him,—eight children, the education of such of them as required it devolving upon the father himself, and encroaching much on his time. The year in which he was appointed Bank-revisor, his young son Matthias was removed by death. The next year, 1788, brought him another boy, whom he named Fritz.

It must not be supposed that the four or five parts of

*Asmus*, which up to this period (1789-90) had proceeded from Claudius's pen, were all that his labours in literature had produced : on the contrary, the writing *these* occupied a comparatively small portion of his time. In 1777 he published a translation from the French of a *History of the Egyptian King Lethos*, which reached a second edition six years afterwards ; in 1780 : "*The Travels of Cyrus ; a Moral History, together with a Treatise on Mythology and Ancient Theology, by Dr Ramsay of Oxford, translated from the French ;*" and in 1782 : "*Errors and Truth ; or Directions for Mankind for a Return to the Universal Principle of all Knowledge. By an unknown Philosopher, translated from the French.*" The tenor of these works was in full keeping with that of *Asmus*. The last of them, by M. Saint Martin, he could heartily respond to ; he met here for the first time with the *expression* of what as yet he had only *felt* and striven to express ; and while the book served to establish more firmly his own views, it also started him on new tracks of thought and research. In the preface to it—all of which is most excellent—there are some passages of great worth, which we cannot forbear quoting.

"Be this book what it may, it leaves worldly affairs and temporal things untouched, preaches renunciation of the human will, and belief in Truth, proclaims the nothingness of this world, the feebleness and frailty of man's sensual and corporeal nature, and the majesty of his intellectual nature, of his spirit ; and on every page leads and impels us from the Seen to the Unseen, from the Temporal to the Eternal ! This is nothing bad, and who would not gladly have put hand to the work ?

"So I have translated this book, and he who thus uses it surely does well, but he who applies it to vain and foolish purposes does not well, and may bethink himself, and become wise.

"We men wander about as in the dark, are perplexed and cannot help ourselves, and the attempts of the learned to

render aid are mere bootless arts. The feeling of their own helplessness has ever been the characteristic of really great men ; besides this, it is a fine feeling, and perhaps the haven whence we must start, in order to discover the North-west Passage.

“ There is a spirit in man which this world cannot satisfy ; which feeds with grief and indignation upon material husks, thorns, and thistles by the wayside, and longs after Home. It has no abiding-place here, and must shortly pass away. Try to conceive, then, how a wisdom, at home only in visible and material nature, can help it. In many ways and manners it may be dear and esteemed by it here, according as it is more or less fragmentary, but satisfy the spirit it cannot. How could it do that which corporeal nature itself cannot do ; and this leaves it at half-way, and when the spirit is flown, remains in the man's study like his globe or electrical apparatus ?

“ What is to *satisfy* man must be *in him*, in his nature, and immortal as himself. While he wanders in the world below it must direct his gaze beyond the being and the course of this corporeal nature, beyond its infirmities and stripes ; thus consoling him ; and, in the land of perplexity and submission, render him *in truth unperplexed and glorious* : when he goes thence, it must go with him through death and decay, and accompany him as a friend home.

“ Such a wisdom, certainly, will be found in no book ; it is not purchasable for gold, nor obtainable by dividing the heart between God and Mammon. Draw off thy shoes, for where thou standest it is holy ground ! But that it *exists*, we know ; and let him who is conscious of breath in his nostrils take this fact to heart, and if he fail to find it in visible and material nature, in his own obscurity, let him be warned by *good* counsel and seek it on another path.”

In addition to Claudius's labours as author and translator, as Bank-revisor and educator of his children, he found

much to do in the way of study. His acquaintance with the most important European languages greatly availed him here. To the writings of Plato, Spinoza, Bacon, and the Fathers of the Church, he applied himself with especial diligence. Historical studies were not lost sight of, and he read deeply into the "Oriental Systems of Religion." "Here, also," remarks Herbst, "we trace the universality of the man. Mere scholarly interest, and a thirst for knowledge without definite aim, never guided him in the course and choice of his studies; here, too, the object of his research is *true* culture only—a growth in wisdom and in the knowledge of God and man in its pure reality."

Thanks to a correspondent of the "*Kirchenfreund*" of 1838, quoted by Herbst, we are enabled to get another glimpse of Claudius in his home at Wandsbeck. The writer, then a student, visited, about the year 1790, our author in his retreat. "I leave you to imagine how joyous and happy I am here, at Wandsbeck," he writes; "I cannot describe it. Claudius is full of love toward me. By his side and in the midst of his good family, I spend the most beautiful evenings. You cannot think how I reckon upon the hours in which I know that he will be disengaged." \* \* \* \* "Claudius has so little show-off about him. \* I find him just as he appears to the public. *Asmus the author* and *Asmus the man* are one and the same; they are not contradictory characters, as is so often the case; in him they harmonize most beautifully." "All betrays a quiet family, happy in their retirement, not only *appearing* to be of one mind and heart, but *thus in reality*. Either before or after supper, Claudius takes his stick, and we ramble through the pleasant wood which skirts his house, and which he has so charmingly and truthfully sung; the coolness of the air, and the beautiful moonlight glimmering through the foliage, often influencing our discourse, and seeming to lead us into higher regions. Or we walk in the garden among the 'choir'



of yellow evening-primroses, and await in silence the moment of their expansion. The children bear us company here, and I am always amused and instructed by their questions. The father points out and explains to them the wonderful phenomenon,—ever directing them to the Creator. It often seems as though we were standing round an altar.

“On Sunday evenings, Claudius reads one of Tauler’s Sermons. The language of these discourses is as full of spirit and as touching as it is simple. All of us sit quite silently round the table, and then Claudius, before beginning, removes with reverence his cap. The tone in which he reads gives additional emphasis to the truth of the matter, and the devout silence and deportment of each may be not without reciprocal influence. The transition to a beautiful devotional hymn is then quite natural, or to the magnificent *Te Deum* of Schulz or to Hasse’s melting *Glorioso Redemptor*,—the little Fritz, also moved by the melody, joining in with his tender voice; he cannot sit on his mother’s knee any longer, but grasps the arm of his father, who has some difficulty in playing on through it all,—the good little fellow fancying perhaps that he helps to draw forth strains of increased beauty.”

Another volume—the Fifth—of *Asmus* saw the light in 1790. It opens with a somewhat lengthy treatise “*On the Immortality of the Soul* ;” besides which, its most important articles are: “*Conversations upon Freedom* ;” a translation from the Greek of the *Apology of Socrates* ; and a “*Letter to Andres*” about John the Baptist. There is also an excellent little “*Parable*,” which runs thus:—

#### A PARABLE.

There was a time when men made shift with what nature brought them, and were forced to live upon acorns, and other hard and coarse fare. Then came from a distance a

man, Osiris by name, and said to them : "There is a better fare for man, and an art of providing it in perpetual plenty; and I am come to teach you the secret." He taught them the secret, and prepared a field before their eyes, and said : "See, *this must ye do! the skyey influences will perform the rest!*" The seed sprang up and increased and brought forth fruit, and men were greatly astonished and delighted, and tilled the field with industry and to great advantage. In course of time some of them found the method of cultivation too simple, and could not put up with the fatigues of the open air and the seasons. "Come," said they, "let us hedge the field round according to rule, and wall it up by art; let us make a canopy over it and pursue our agriculture beneath, with comfort and every convenience; the skyey influences will not be so very necessary—besides, no one sees them." "But," returned others, "Osiris opened heaven, and said : *This must ye do! the skyey influences will perform the rest!*" "Yes; but only to set agriculture going," was the reply; "we can paint the sky on the ceiling, for that matter." So they had their field hedged and walled round after rule and art, and over it raised a canopy, whereon they painted the sky. And the corn would not grow! And they cultivated, and ploughed, dunged, and tilled again and again—and yet the corn would not grow! And they tilled and tilled.

And many of the standers-by looked on and laughed them to scorn. Finally, also, they treated Osiris and his secret in like manner.\*

The treatise on the Immortality of the Soul is hardly admissible into the present work. It contains little that is either new or ingenious: seventy years ago, when it was first published, this could not probably have been said of it. The conclusion at which, after some loosely scientific remarks,

\* Werke. Th. 5. S. 124.

Claudius arrives, is that generally entertained :—that *man is immortal*. “The good *presage* immortality,” says Plato; and illustrations of this remark (not, however, quoted by Claudius), comprise our author’s strongest argument. Probably the subject of immortality suggested to him a translation of Socrates’ “*Apology*.”

The “*Conversations upon Freedom*” are discursive and not always clear; yet they inculcate a great principle, and present here and there passages of stirring eloquence. The conversation is begun by one of the party, announcing to the others his late success in an English Lottery;—how he is the holder of the first prize; and thus prepossessed in favour of England, he declares its inhabitants to be the freest nation under the sun. The talk now turns upon liberty—a word upon the definition of which they cannot at first agree. After a while, true liberty is found to consist, *not*, as one of them, Bartolo, suggested,—“in being at nobody’s command, and doing whatever we please;” but *in doing what is right*. Nor do they stop here. They agree that the will of God must be the standard of right and wrong; that deviation therefrom must inevitably entail misery; and that whoever thus deviates, be he who he may, is on the wrong path. The hindrances to “doing right” are next discussed. These are not outward, but have their origin within the man: voluntary adherence to “things which are nothing and can avail nothing,” and self-imposed slavery to sin. They agree that although the clay may not venture to ask the Potter: Wherefore hast Thou made me thus? it may yet rest assured that “it cannot derive from God what is contrary to its nature;” and that these deviations from right *are* contrary to the nature of man, inasmuch as man would fain be happy, while *they* can but render him wretched—a Prodigal Son—the speakers have already discovered. “Men are slaves and in chains; but not born to be thus, nor have they lost the hope of again becoming free.” The story of John Huss’s

trial and martyrdom is produced to show how, under the most trying circumstances, true freedom is to be obtained; in short, Claudius holds and teaches with our own Cowper, that

“He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,  
And all are slaves beside.”

Then follows the “Letter to Andres” about John the Baptist. After some introductory remarks, Claudius writes:—

“Thou knowest what was the kind of distinction John the Baptist enjoyed, and how he has not refused it. But I will not reckon this to him so highly. I cannot find it so great and difficult that he and all men who have had the happiness of knowing Christ more intimately—that such could forfeit their heads, suffer martyrdom, and die for Him. Beyond the mountains this might have been done, and even from the mere reading of the Evangelists. But that John the Baptist, in the even way, could be thus faithful; that he could go among men, and yet have *nothing* to do with aught save the good cause; that he could undeviatingly esteem Truth beyond all things, and *keep it so fixed* in his eye; that he could be so humble, and under all circumstances *remain* thus; in short—that he was so *small*, and that human nature stirred not within him—this is difficult, Andres! this is great!

“From this point of view we cannot long and reverently enough regard the form of John the Baptist, as seen in what the Scriptures say of him.

“He was to go before the *Lord*, that he might prepare His way. No more than this was allotted him, nor could he do more. The man who pretends to make sunbeams is a quack, ignorant of both himself and the sun; but he who removes and levels mountains and hills which bar the way, accomplishes a true work, and a very great one. But he grasps also a hot iron; father, mother, and the *companions of*

*his house rise up against him*, if he will have God for his *Friend*. Other salvation than this is there none—the idols must be overthrown and utterly done away with. Andres, beat upon thy heart! *Here* lies the *mystery*, and here what is nothing must become something, and what is *something* must come to nought. For *Truth* possesses all things, and nothing is wanting to it but a residence—as theatre and space for its glory.

“But we will regard the form of the Precursor of Truth.

“When the news of him, as the *Messenger of Salvation*, reached Jerusalem and the country round about the city, from the wilderness the people went out—to see brilliant things and a man in white raiment. Thou mayest suppose that John well knew how they expected him to come, and how they would rather have seen him;—but there he stood, wearing a garment of camel’s hair, and preaching *repentance*.

“The people were in error, and all wondered in their hearts whether it could be that he were the Christ—was he indeed Elias; was he more than a prophet? And as those deputed from Jerusalem—Priests and Levites—came to him and asked: Who art thou?—he confessed and denied not, and confessed ‘I am not the Christ.’ Art thou Elias? and he said, ‘I am not.’ Art thou a prophet? and he answered, ‘No!’

“The city of Jerusalem went out to him, and the whole land of Judea and all the countries about Jordan, and confessed their sins. And now the lights and great men of the people, many Pharisees and Sadducees, came openly to him. And as he saw them come, he said plainly to them: ‘O generation of vipers, who hath warned ye to flee from the wrath to come? See that ye bring forth fruits meet for repentance.’

“Those who stood round him looked at him, and regarded him as a man from heaven, knowing all things, and in whose hands were all things;—regarding his preaching as a true

celestial vision and revelation, and his baptism as a miraculous baptism of the Spirit.—And he said :—‘*A man can take nothing, except it be given him from above. He who is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth. He who cometh from heaven is above all. I baptize with water; but after me cometh One who will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire—the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose.*’” \*

The year 1790 found Claudius in the zenith of his career as Man of Letters. From this date, up to the time of his death, in 1815, those incidents of his life of which any mention is to be found are few in number, and frequently of a character not calculated generally to interest.

The year 1790, also, was an eventful year for France, and indeed for all Europe. It stands nearly at the beginning of a series of eventful years, in which the fearful drama of the French Revolution was played. Already the memorable “Assembling of States General” had taken place at Versailles; already the Royal Family had been forced, under escort of maddened rabble, to proceed to Paris; already democracy had stood forth like a tiger in scent of blood—and the years immediately following were to be signalized by atrocities which historians have tried in vain to depict.

Other countries could not possibly remain unaffected by the Revolution, and, as a natural result, its influence upon the authors of those countries was wide and powerful. Germany shared largely in its influences. Hamburg was thronged with emigrant nobles and merchants, and was again rendered a centre of action, which this time was chiefly political. The surviving members of the literary circle which we have already mentioned in a former chapter, and Klopstock also, sympathized more or less heartily with the Revolution.

\* Werke. Th. 5. S. 132.

Not so Claudius, to whom the proceedings, almost as a whole, appeared *wrong*. Herbst takes much pains here to free him from all suspicion of bias from motives of personal interest—royal patronage, and so forth; and shows that upwards of twelve years before, he had unfolded essentially the same political views respecting monarchy and the duties of the people thereto, as he now held. The reader will at once call to mind the conversation between *Asmus* and the Emperor of Japan, in the third volume of Claudius's Works. \* The Revolution afforded him another opportunity of declaring his views: the sixth volume opens with an interesting and able article "*On the New Politics*," to which our attention will presently be directed. Several of his nearest friends, amongst whom were F. Jacobi, Stolberg, and Schlosser, men of various modes of thought, but yet, together with Claudius, holding much in common, also condemned the proceedings; probably not altogether from the same motives as Claudius, "whose canon consisted alone of the Bible and the Ten Commandments." He belonged to the people and loved them; with their real welfare at heart, he earnestly desired to teach them the way to true happiness, the "great royal road to freedom." What wonder, then, that when he beheld the people,—although of another nation yet kindred,—having broken through all bounds, pursuing a course of enormities and crimes—and thus of necessity incurring heavy penalty, the *wages* of sin—what wonder that he felt grieved at the sight? The standard of right and wrong by which he judged he knew was infallible; and hence his calm yet bold denunciations of the errors and outrages of the mob.

In July, 1792, Claudius's son Ernst was born, and in 1794 another son, Franz. These years and the intermediate ones are marked by the almost intimacy which existed between the celebrated Princess Amelia von Gallitzin and the

\* See Chapter 2.

Claudius family. An interesting correspondence was carried on for some time between these friends.

The first break in Claudius's domestic circle happened in 1796: Christiana, the second daughter, was taken away by death. Claudius, as all the survivors, keenly felt the loss: to us the event is interesting as giving rise to one of his most beautiful little songs: \*—

#### CHRISTIANA.

A little star shone in the sky,—  
A star of beauteous kind ;  
Forthshedding there a lovely light—  
So gentle,—so refined !

Full well I knew its wonted place,  
Its station in the sky ;  
At eventide I used to trace  
It out with earnest eye.

Long would I stand before that star,  
From it draw pleasure rare ;  
Look upward to its light afar,  
And thank God that 'twas there.

But now my little star is gone :  
I seek it all around—  
And where in other days it shone  
It cannot now be found.

It is matter for regret that Claudius became involved in several literary squabbles about this time. It would be little to our purpose to enter at all into these, but we must not pass over an unfortunate rencounter of his with Goethe and Schiller. In the *Musenalmanach* for 1797, these poets had published conjointly a series of epigrams, "*Xenien*" as they were termed—and Schiller had made our Wandsbeck Messenger the subject of one of them. Referring to Saint

\* Werke. Th. vi. S. 88.



Martin's Work "*Erreurs et Vérité*," which Claudius had translated, it runs:—

"Error and Truth, wouldst thou bring, O thou of Wandsbeck the  
Messenger;

Truth thou foundest too heavy; Error, thou broughtest *that* forth!"

It had been better for Claudius's fair fame had he declined breaking a lance with such powerful antagonists, about so trivial a circumstance. If he could have contented himself with letting the epigram do its worst—no great stretch of contentment—allowing it to pass apparently unnoticed by him, its effect would have been harmless enough, at most, a smile. But he determined on returning it, and accordingly did so in a series of epigrams possessing little worth, and wisely withheld from his "*Works*."

Jacobi, who now resided at Wandsbeck, was on the most friendly terms with Claudius. His two sisters lived with him, and the intercourse between the families appears to have been of a highly interesting character. Claudius's elder daughters were talented and accomplished, the younger children playful and buoyant, "enlivening the plain, peaceful dwelling, without making too much noise." So wrote Jacobi in a letter to Goethe. Wandsbeck was growing celebrated as the home of these distinguished men, and the visitors attracted thither on their account were not few. Frederick Perthes, the Hamburg publisher, whose interesting and eventful biography has lately been published in this country, was fortunate enough to receive a special invitation from Jacobi, with whom he had been acquainted at Hamburg. He was soon introduced to the Claudius circle, and shortly afterwards made overtures to Caroline Claudius, which, as far as the young lady herself was concerned, were successful. It only remained to get the father's consent, which, after some hesitation, he cordially gave.

In the August of 1797 they were married. The following

year, Anna, Claudius's third daughter, became the wife of Max, Jacobi's son, who had recently completed his studies in England, and settled down as physician at Væls.

The sixth volume of *Asmus* appeared almost at the same time as this second marriage took place; and a few months later, the first part of *Fenelon's Religious Works*, which Claudius had translated into German—his son-in-law, Perthes, publishing both. The new volume of *Asmus* begins with an article "*On the New Politics*" called forth by the then recent events in France. It opens with a statement of the respective tenets of the old and new systems, and an estimate of their merits. Claudius then urges that true reformation must proceed from within outwards, and not from without. He finds the "New-fangled Rights of Man" to be somewhat inconceivable, examines them severally as declared at the Assembly at Versailles, analyses their meaning or apparent meaning, and awards approval or disapproval accordingly. Lastly, he preaches "obedience, order, love, faith, and confidence in God and man."

"But shall love," he asks, "shall faith and confidence, ever love, believe, and confide, only to be ever deceived and abused? Shall the *many* give up their rights in order that *one* or the *few* may lord it over them, and maltreat them with impunity?"

"God forbid! abused love is like human blood, it cries to heaven for vengeance. No! right must be right—must remain right. I strive not *against* the people, but *for* them—and where force and injustice fall to the lot of the little one, I desire not to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, but would far rather suffer ignominy with my brethren.

"Kings and rulers are given to men for purposes of *good* and not of *evil*. They are not to commit injustice, but are to do what is just and equal, knowing that they also have a Master in heaven. This *Master* has placed them above other men for the benefit of such others, and that these may

receive acts of kindness at their hands. And as the millions or thousands who expect from them a measure of domestic quiet and temporal prosperity, *must* be obedient to them, reposing faith and confidence in them,—so the rulers *must* fill, and with both hands press and shake down, that measure, *must* render the people happy. Nor is this all.

“When a king, surrounded with splendour, sits upon his throne and in the midst of his people, he sits there to deal out not merely earthly, but also heavenly, prosperity, he sits there, like a sacred artist, by purely beneficent, purely mild and noble, purely great and good actions, to copy God, and to make men hunger and thirst after *Him*.

“This ought to be the work of kings and rulers! To this end they were appointed, and to this end were crown and sceptre given to the first kings. And hence it is that we men look upon these things with love, expecting nothing but good from him who bears them, and unwillingly hearing aught evil of him. We are but children, and therefore the dear God must deal with us as with children, and work privately and behind our back for our weal. Hence, institutions were required, and we feel, indeed, that these institutions ought to be as pure as their Institutor.

“Kings and rulers! it is *on God's account* that your throne is set in the world. He who sits thereon shall be great and invincible, but justice and truth must stand by him, and render him so! These alone make man great, and these alone are invincible.”

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Very excellent is the conclusion :—

“That a great heart must beat somewhere for *physical nature*, by means of, and from which she receives life and motion in all her parts, is conceivable. A lifeless Stockholmdial, separated from the constructor who gave it motion, may go in Hamburgh or Osnabruck, but the living universe can no more be separated from its heart than can the human

body from *its*—and in the small as in the large, in particular as in general, a continuous and never-ceasing *systole* and *diastole* is required. If the self-same *great heart* that must somewhere beat for *physical nature*, should beat for *man's moral nature* also, we might know on what we have to depend, and at the same time gain some information respecting the unconquerable guiding power of the human will, in general as well as in politics, and respecting the firm, immoveable point. But however this may be, man requires some solid ground on which to anchor, something not dependent on him, but on which he may depend. The anchor must hold the vessel, but should the vessel slip anchor, her course is uncertain, and disaster at no great distance.

“When David found his enemy and persecutor, Saul, in the cave, quite in his power, and did not kill him, but only cut away a shred of his garment, it was not the natural passion of man that moved and impelled him thus to act, but *something other* than this. When Socrates refused to take advantage of the plan arranged by his disciples for enabling him to escape from prison, but preferred rather to die, and did die, it was not the natural inclination of man that actuated him, but *something other*. Most men would have left their prison, and would not have been satisfied with the shred. And why? Because the natural inclinations of the majority actuate and prompt them, and the ‘*something other*’ cannot get in a word.

“Our senses and passions are indeed the horns, cymbals, and cornets, that confuse, render indistinct, and drown within us the sound and voice of truth. They are the hundred heavy chains that fetter and hold down poor humanity, and cover us with disgrace. He who has freed himself from but one of them deserves honourable mention—and so ever further, along the far-extending and distasteful mountain.

And he who has climbed to the very summit, he who, by his willing and running, or rather by the grace of God,\* has advanced so far that all his chains have *fallen from him* and clink upon him no more, is veritably a *freeman*. He is *essentially* distinct, and heaven-far removed from the *liberty agitator*; and the relation of them to one another is as *wishing-to-be* is to *being*, as *beneath* is to *above*, as *nothing* is to *everything*.

"The *freeman* is delivered from earth and all minor interests; henceforth nothing affects him, nothing concerns, impels, and actuates him but the true and the good. He has put off the robe of flesh; he is nourished upon the food of the gods, he sails the ocean of *pure love*.

"*Such a man* has a right to speak, and is *above* laws. Not that the laws are not to be ever sacredly observed and kept, but because he is otherwise ordered within, and continually, and under all circumstances, lavish—doing more than the laws require; because he goes two miles with him who asks but one; because he not only forbears to commit adultery, but looks upon no woman lusting in his heart; because he not only does not hate his enemies, but also blesses them that curse him, does good to them that hate him, and, like the Father in heaven, would have the sun rise upon both the evil and the good.

"If, then, a *man of this stamp* had had compassion on a people, wandering and in lack of help and guidance, and, actuated by the true and the good, had taken the sceptre into his hands, from whom would he have derived his kingship, his right, his power?" \* \* \*

"Here I pause, and be it permitted to a weak one, to speak of the infirmities of his fellows. But good counsel is ever of worth, whether coming from the weak or from the strong.

"When a good house-father uses a light at night, he does not kindle it out of doors, under the wide firmament with

\* Rom. ix. 16.

its thousands of stars, and let it shine in at the window from without, but he strikes it with flint and steel carefully and according to art *within* doors, and lets it shine through the window from the inside.

"We *cannot* ascend the mountain without descending. And although ascent is difficult, yet we are ever getting nearer the top, and at every step the surrounding prospect grows freer and more beautiful. And above is *above* !

"Now, as the slave may manage to divest himself of his chains, this much is plain, that by mere knowing and reasoning he cannot snap them, but that if he earnestly desires to be rid of them he must put hand to the task.

"And this is the reformation that I propose.

"It is our day's work in this world, the Great Royal Road to Freedom which brings regret to none."\*

The position which Claudius here strives after is : "that religion is indispensable in securing to mankind a certain moral stay (*Haltung*), and in maintaining order and prosperity in the world," and that "the people that would wish to do away with religion are ignorant both of the world and of man." This is expressed in a brief sequel to the articles from which we have quoted.

The "*Letters to Andres*" follow :—

\* Werke. Th. 6. S. 31—40.

## LETTERS TO ANDRES.

## LETTER I.

WHEN I read in the Bible of an old and of a new covenant, of a connection and intercourse between the Highest and our race, I often close the book, Andres, and fold my hands, that men are so highly esteemed and worthy before God.

Truly this presses us into the dust, but at the same time we gain respect for ourselves, and scent the morning air—and we cannot sufficiently venerate and love the *Mediator* between the two, and might also take part in loving Him for others, who know no better.

Man may misapprehend, despise, and retard truth; but however perversely he act, in however roundabout a manner, it is he alone who is astray, and in all his actions he seeks it, and has it in his thoughts. He cannot do without truth; and when it comes before him it is impossible for him to withhold his homage.

To err is human, Andres. But truth is innocent. It is ever ready and ever worthy, and will also perhaps get justice done it at the end.

But it grieves thee, thou writest, to see our Lord Christ misknown and despised. Thou dear good soul, well may it grieve thee; he who has gray hairs on His account may carry them with honour.

Certainly, however, He need cause thee none. He will remain, indeed, what He is. So many of them as fail to recognize truth and avail themselves of it, are truly injured by thus acting; but what does it matter to truth whether they have recognized and employed it or not? Truth has need of no man, and it is the greatness and glory of its

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nature that it stands ever ready, is not wearied by ingratitude, and, like the morning-sun, is *surrounded* by fogs and clouds only to *purify* and *gild* them.

Let them surround it, Andres, and trouble not thy heart with what thou canst not alter.

He who will not believe in Christ must try how he can do without Him. For you and me this is impossible. We need some one to raise and support us in life, to lay His hand beneath our head when we come to die ; and this He can do abundantly, according as it is written of Him, and we know no one by whom we would rather have it done.

No one has ever loved like Him, and anything so intrinsically good and great as the Bible represents Him to have been, has never yet entered into the heart of man, and surpasses all his desert and merit. It is a *Divine Form* arising before the poor pilgrim like a star in the night, and filling his inmost necessity, his secretest expectations and wishes.

We will believe in Him, Andres, even if no one else would. He who has not believed in Him because of others, — how should he, because of them, cease to believe in Him ?

Only that so tender and heavenly a form is quite too easily altered and disfigured, and cannot, so to speak, be touched by human hand without suffering loss. Hence, there has been no end to men's quarrellings and disputings about Him.

Of all the disputants, those who hold the Bible to be true, and yet would make natural what is supernatural, supporting it by, and making it correspond with, their philosophy, are indisputably the weakest ; — for they possess neither understanding nor courage, and are neither fish nor flesh. Moreover they are continually in difficulties, and do not arrive at their end ; for it is much more difficult to preserve reason from revelation, than revelation from reason ; and if they arrive at their end they gain nothing.

He who can content himself with letting human wisdom



be what it is ; who acknowledges a greater wisdom still, and that God may have ways and means of which man is totally ignorant ; that there must be a revelation beyond and above our perception ; and that what is inconceivable in this revelation is no reproach to it, but if bearing the stamp of Divine Love, is on the contrary its token and beauty—this man is better off, and can look with unconcern upon all such disputings, and even gather into his barns.

All must, of course, be connected, and perhaps may also be brought to correspond, if the *data* are known. Speculators will not allow themselves to dream that the most brilliant field for speculation lies behind the church-wall.


But be that as it may, Andres, we believe the Bible, word for word, and hold plainly and uprightly to what the apostles say and declare of Christ.

Those who themselves have seen and heard Him and have lain on His breast, have been nearer Him than we and the commentators. And whatever hitherto may have been found out by the learned,—however well they may know and understand, yet for all that the apostles must have known and understood better.

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## LETTER II.

When the people in the town of the Samaritans, where our Lord Christ sought lodging, would not receive Him, His disciples, James and John, said : “ Lord, wilt Thou that we call down fire from heaven to consume them, as did Elias ? ” —And this thou thinkest so wrong, and canst neither forgive nor forget it!—Thou delightest me, Andres ! But I cannot suffer stigma to rest upon my James and John ;



I must speak a word for them with thee, and save their honour.

It may be remarked, beforehand, that we need not be so anxious about the "calling down fire from heaven," for there is no fear of it in this case; He who can permit it to come down, will know already what He has to do, and what to leave undone. We are not in a position to judge respecting doings of a higher order, and therefore must not wish to judge. The matter here spoken of is merely human; and now I will attempt to reconcile unto thee the Sons of Thunder.

In the first place they had before them the example of Elias, whom they had so lately seen in very glorious circumstances, and then they sought their Master's approbation, and naturally His power also. But thou usest to say: Be silent of another, or put thyself completely in his place. We will do thus: independently of our purpose it were well to be seated *there*.

Christ was journeying with His disciples to Jerusalem. He travelled hereabout amidst matters Samaritan, and made this journey, as all His others, that he might provide the inhabitants and all men with a place of rest, and prepare for them an eternal refuge. The disciples, indeed, although He had occasionally spoken of it to them, might not yet perhaps have so entirely understood this. But they had been about with Him now, these two, for three whole years, and had seen that His journeyings were not on His own account, and that He was not come to be ministered unto; that, right and left, and without respect of persons, He taught and did nothing but good, that He had never to be supplicated twice, and that He met every one who needed Him with love and friendliness. Now, too, it was the last time that here required their lodging, for the time was completed, and He was to go hence—here He went to meet ignominy and death.—And now His nightly couch is denied Him and

His messengers repulsed. . . . Andres, canst thou take it amiss of the disciples that they were indignant *then*? He is no base man whose gall overflows at seeing such kindness met with ingratitude, and justice and equity trodden under-foot!

Now add to this the adherence and love which the disciples manifested in their attachment to and dependence upon their Master. He to whom it is all the same whatever happens, can speak good-humouredly enough. But he who is somewhat concerned thereby, and whose breast is not altogether empty, is affected otherwise than the icicles on the roof of the Temple of Tolerance. The heart also has its rights, and may not be trifled with as a bird. Generally speaking "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" is not injustice! And blame not to me the man who stands up for justice and equity, and lays hand to sword for it. Something of the defiance which the three Jews possessed,—supported by nothing in the world save itself and their good cause, and yet disdaining to bow before force and the multitude,—is not so much amiss. "Our God," they said, "is well able to save us. And even if He will not, yet know this, that neither will we worship the golden calf."

In short, as these three men showed their nobleness by never thinking of the fire, so it was not ignoble on the part of the two disciples that *they* did think of it.

Christ indeed chided them; and He who, having in His hand "fire from heaven," could hold back and conceal it beneath his coat woven throughout, and could suffer treatment as a malefactor before friend and foe, that the will of God, the Father in heaven, might be done, *He* might chide, and before Him the disciples would have to be ashamed at not knowing of what Spirit they were the children. But I also know that before every other spirit they had nothing to blush for, and that the spirit of Christianity is not called without cause a *Spirit of Glory*.

To be good is one thing, to be noble another—to be free is not to tear at and rattle the chains. Noble men there are by nature; but none is good save the one God, and he whom God has made so.

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## LETTER III.

I will distinguish these terms further for thee.—

Patriotism; kindness in an enemy's land; a king in captivity—these are noble things. He who delights in the good, who desires, and wars and struggles with himself, that he may become good, is a noble man.

Why should I go far into this subject with thee?—thou knowest how it stands better than I. Not to love vanity, to be impartial, to do no evil, to be spiritually-minded on receiving injury, and so on—are always desired, though not always attainable. There may be outward purity, yet not inward. The field may be held, but for all that there is no peace. The enemy remains in the land; and then one is pestered and plagued with his prisoners.

To make an end to *all discord*—to make a *pure house*:—this is the wisdom of God, which the noble have desired to look into, which the wise know, and which fools despise.

Thus nobleness is not goodness; but for all that it is noble and no common thing, and it becomes every man to honour and esteem it wheresoever he meets with it.

Of those who are noble as far as words go, that is, who speak and write alone of nobleness and goodness, whether deeply learned or unlearned, we say nothing here. They are not included at all.

Without struggle and self-denial man can attain neither to nobleness nor to real worth; without struggle he is ignorant of the gulf within us between willing and being,

between nobleness and goodness—and must remain so. “Let them that sail the ocean tell of its perils.—Strange marvels are there, many monsters and whales: through them we steer along.”

Experience makes the master. Those alone who have explored the defiles and labyrinths of that great chasm, who have done battle with the strange marvels and manifold monsters before the Gates of Peace, and have risked themselves therein—only such can know whether toil and peril are really there, and whether a *Divine Branch* is needed or not. And it would be very amusing to see a house-painter anxious to set right, by his maps, one of those noble knights and veterans, grown gray among his weapons, and attempting to teach him a better course.

Thou seest then the *sort of people* to whom religion may appear an indifferent and dispensable thing, and the sort to whom it is indispensable and divine; and that the latter, all compliment apart, need not be ashamed of their dependence and reverence.

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#### LETTER IV.

Thou wishest to know the intention of the *subterranean* undertakings in the old mythologies, and why the great heroic men, the ardent explorers and lovers of truth, have descended into the nether world.

I fancy, Andres, it was because they could not discover the object of their search here. He who finds satisfaction below must rest content with what is imperfect, visible, changing, and perishable. Thus, if the friend whom their soul loved were perfect, invisible, immutable, and eternal,

they were obliged to go and seek for him elsewhere. They found his footprints indeed in the visible and the transient ; but *him* they found not.

But wherefore seek self-ennobling *under* the earth ?

Nothing is sown in air ! Seeds and animals must render up to the earth their outward covering, before they can become endowed with a new form and being. Men also go bodily into the earth that they may there shake off their dust and get nearer to truth. It may be that a figure is taken from that ; or, perhaps, it is because the grain of wheat, before it bring forth fruit, must die, and thus make a *downward* step ; or because philosophers wished to accommodate themselves to the ideas of the world, which supposes and seeks treasure there ; or because the object of their desires is to be found just where it costs trouble to arrive at—a place which not every one can see from his own door. Perhaps for yet other reasons, Andres ; I cannot tell ; but it seems to me that we had to find out aught, the visionaries among us would seek in the air, and the true, earnest ones under the earth.

Plainly we must turn our eyes from all that is visible if we would discover the invisible. Not that heaven and earth are not beautiful and worthy our regard. They are beautiful indeed, and they are here that we *may* regard them. They should set in motion our faculties, reminding us, by their loveliness, of One who is lovelier still, and making the heart long after Him. But, this done, their part is performed, and they can help us no further.

Man is richer than they, and possesses what they cannot bestow. All that he sees around him in the enjoyment of life, dies ; and *he* is conscious of immortality. In visible nature he sees nothing but *things of time and place* ; and *he* is conscious of an Eternal and an Infinite. He perceives only variety, pure distraction, and fragmentariness ; and yet he would ever conceive unity under One, deduce from One, &c.

How and whence could such heterogeneous and wonderful things get to him, if they issued not from himself—if there were not something heterogeneous and wonderful within him?

Even the wisdom and order which man finds in visible nature—he contributes more to this than he takes from it. For he could not discern it, had he not something within him to which to relate it; just as we cannot measure without having some standard. To him, heaven and earth are but the confirmation of a knowledge of which he is inwardly conscious, which gives him boldness and courage to lord it over all things, and from his own resources to rectify all things. Amidst the glory of creation he is greater, and feels himself greater, than all that surrounds him; and he longs for something other.

Andres, man bears within him the germ of *perfection*, and finds, without, no peace of mind. Hence he chases so restlessly its images and counterfeits in the *visible* and *invisible* mirror, and with so much joy and eagerness attaches himself to them; hoping thereby to recover. But images are images. When they are striking they may very agreeably surprise and delude, but they can never satisfy. Only the Being Himself can do this, only *free Light and Life*—and this none but He who possesses it can impart.

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#### LETTER V.

“And it came to pass that He entered into a city called *Nain*; and many of His disciples went with Him, and much people. But as He drew near to the gate of the city, behold, they were bringing forth a dead man, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow, and much people were with

her. And as the Lord saw her, He was moved with compassion, and said unto her ; Weep not. And went up and touched the coffin, and the bearers stood still. And he said : Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And the dead man arose and began to speak ; and He gave him to his mother."

We cannot read a narrative like this without calling the mother blessed ; the dead man, the bearers, and all who were present too ; but especially the mother. Thou knowest, Andres, when one's child whom he longs to keep by his side, is dangerously ill, how the father goes about, wringing his hands, yet ever hoping, even when it is impossible and wrong to hope longer. He hopes incessantly,—so long as the invalid still lives and is in the bed. But when the corpse lies upon the board, when the coffin is brought in, and the bearers arrive—the father must then indeed give up hoping, and there remains nothing for him but to walk behind the coffin and weep.

The widow of Nain, also, seems to have known no other counsel ; and she had ceased hoping, when, following the dead body, she passed out of the city-gate. With her it was the same as with us ; her child would have been buried and covered with earth, and she would have had to return home alone, had it not happened that our Lord Christ was passing that very way, and she had met Him with the corpse.

And just this renders the fact so great and joyful—that He has been once already upon earth, and that men might then have had the happiness of meeting him.

"And when the Lord saw her, He was moved with compassion, and said unto her, 'Weep not.'"

There is always something immeasurably tender and generous in the demeanour of Christ. Generally speaking, the man who cannot assist, sympathizes, and he who sympathizes is unable to assist. Many a man is sympathizing because his turn may come next, because the object of his sympathy is necessary, or under obligation to him, and so



forth. But here it is quite different. The widow, when first she saw Christ, had a right to expect, and a claim upon His compassion; but *really* there was another relation between Him and her. *Before Him*, she, as we are all ungrateful children, was a froward daughter, who had left her father's house and brought misery upon herself; and Christ was the Father, seeking His lost child, and now, here in a wretched hut, and amidst the bitter consequences of her transgression, He had found her. She must have been abashed at coming before Him, and have deserved and expected nothing but reproaches.

But "when the Lord saw her He ~~was~~ moved with compassion, and said unto her, Weep not."

Nor did He rest satisfied here. He would not merely forget and forgive, but advise her in her present situation and perplexity.

"And He went up and touched the coffin, and the bearers stood still."

Probably the widow knew not the Lord Christ, and thus in her sorrow she would not particularly have heeded the Rabbi and His "Weep not." Her eye had never left the coffin, and she expected nothing of the Rabbi—nothing even when He went up and touched the coffin, bidding the young man arise.

But when the head arose out of the coffin, when her only son sat up and began to speak, and was restored to her . . . how *then*, Andres, would she regard the wonderful Rabbi, how *then* would she throw herself on the ground before Him, and kiss His hands and feet!

And what of the by-standers? thou thinkest. Luke says: "Fear came upon them all, and they praised God," which appears to me very natural. For, touching as the scene must have been, the higher interest must nevertheless gain the upperhand. The widow is lost sight of, and men, trembling, glorify God for the truth that only the tabernacle

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—the outward—is destroyed by death, that the spirit of man remains after death, and that we may safely count upon meeting our lost ones once more.

Andres! they that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth. . . . .

But also the dead that are *not* in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth.

His kingdom was not of this world. Although He was lord and master of visible nature, although His teachings were surpassingly beneficent and adapted to this life, and He himself, while in the body, never lost an opportunity of rendering help and service to man, yet this was not properly His field and sphere. He was placed over things invisible—to take charge of things divine. And all His visible works and miracles were but His minor and lower works, performed and done by Him in order to instruct men concerning His greater ones, and by means of that which they saw, to open their eyes unto that which they saw not.

When He said to the palsied man: "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee!" the man himself would certainly have known and been conscious of what it was to have his sins forgiven, but the Scribes who stood by did not know, and had their doubts about it. And Christ said: "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, He said unto the sick of the palsy, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And he arose, and went to his home."

So also here. The waking-up of a corpse is truly a great work, but there is a yet greater. As mind and volition are greater and nobler than body and mechanism, so, too, the awakening of the *spiritual young man* at Nain, or the restoration of our spirit to its pristine glory, is another thing. But this high and peculiar work of Christ is invisible. In order, however, that we might discern in Him the Hero and Helper, the Expectation of the world, and the Desire of all the



usable, they were perplexed, and could not tell what to do with it. But some laughed it to scorn, and said that the key was no key at all ; and they made no use of it.

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## LETTER VII.

Ever is it thus, Andres—the principal points of a religion are veiled and hidden ; hence, the Holy Supper is of course a mystery also. The followers of Christ have thus regarded it from the beginning, and so Luther has held it. The first Christians, too, preferred to celebrate it privately, and even in the times of public Christian worship, the rest of the congregation had to retire.

Now with mysteries in general, it is a fact that he who is ignorant of them offers their explanation, and he who explains does not know them. They are not to be extorted and taken by force, but the man who seeks to deserve them, and can attain to the friendship of their possessor, will experience them from time to time. We will therefore stand with reverence and humility before the *door* of this supremely divine mystery, and regard its *exterior*, simply, and as the Bible presents it to us. It lies open to every man, and, as the very last evening and farewell, resembles nothing else in this world, seeing that the world has beheld but once *such* an evening and *such* a farewell.

As Christ Himself says, and all Christians believe,—the Old Testament is related to the New. Such high spiritual ideas as those of heavenly things, of an invisible pollution and a spiritual fall, of an unseen purification and of a promised Restorer to arrive in due time—such ideas could be handed from man to man among the first men who were nearer the great events, but in course of time they would

have been blotted out and lost to the world, had not the wise of antiquity, and the prophets, presented them in a sensuous garb before the eyes, and retained them there. Moses was pre-eminently such a wise man and prophet; and in order to invest these externals with more interest he connected them with the political history of his nation, that he might place "a sign in their hands and a monument before their faces, so that God's law should be in their mouth, who had led them mightily out of Egypt." And we may regard the Mosaic worship, besides what it was in itself, as the most complete prophecy of Christ which we possess. The Scriptures tell us, also, that from that time no prophet like Moses had arisen, and Moses spake with Christ on the mount concerning the work which He should accomplish in Jerusalem.

The sacred writings of the New Testament express very definitely that the body and blood of Christ are the means of purification and redemption for fallen man.

"Sacrifice and offering thou hast not desired, but hast prepared for me thy body."

"The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

"But now also you hath He reconciled, with the body of His flesh through death."

"And know this, that ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without stain.

"Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven."

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: whosoever eateth of this bread shall never die. And the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

"Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."

We may now understand or not what the body and blood of Christ are: *according to the Bible* man must enjoy them and participate in them, if he would thrive. Thus Moses had ordained that a Paschal lamb should be slain, and "its blood sprinkled upon both the door-posts and the lintel, so that the destroying angel might pass by." Thus were sacrifices appointed, and a High-priest, who, on the day of atonement, carried blood into the Holy of Holies.

"We also have a Paschal Lamb—Christ sacrificed for us."

"And Christ hath appeared at the end of the world, to remove sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

"But Christ being come an High-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Either, or! We must tear into pieces the Bible, or hold fast to the confession, "given for you and shed for the remission of sins," hitherto declared and believed with profit.

That the whole affair is beyond our insight, that we cannot comprehend it, says little against it. For it must not be pronounced the wit and work of man: according to our own account of it, and the traditions of all nations, where it is more or less clearly spoken of, it is announced as a matter of higher import and origin. And if we trace a Will, willing with inconceivable pity, it cannot seem strange if an Understanding has grown with it.

For the rest, we are every moment the recipients of benefits which we do not comprehend. We are born and nourished, we draw breath, and understand nothing of it all. We do not understand the medicine for the body which we take, yet it helps us, and sometimes saves our life. He who is skilled in the art understands, and knows how to apply it. And there is therefore a difference between him who

knows, and him who does—not know. The latter may be destitute of truth and foundation; yet the matter comes from a good source.

But I return to that last evening, when our Lord gave the necessary information to His disciples as to what impended, and then took leave of them.

Andres, the departure of Socrates from the world was very beautiful and touching; when he had finished speaking to his disciples, and, putting the cup of poison to his lips, had drunk, they wept and threw themselves upon the ground. But more than Socrates is here; here is the glory of God; and we would pass hence, even as Christ, when set apart unto death and already anointed to His burial, entered the large upper-room and sat down beside the passover.

And He said to the twelve: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

As He had loved His own who were in the world, so loved He them even unto the end. We cannot read about it enough: how, with such a work before Him to accomplish, such a cup to drink, He lets John lean upon His breast at the Last Supper, and passes the bread and cup to His disciples; His exceeding sorrow as He speaks of him who shall betray Him, yet forbears to name His betrayer, and only lets him feel that his secret is known; how He tells Peter, after his strong expressions of fidelity, of the cock and its twice crowing, and how, about to leave His disciples to prepare a place for them, He calls them His friends, and speaks of the time when they shall see Him again and their heart shall rejoice, and their joy no one shall take from them.

But the conversation of this sacred company referred not merely to taking-leave of friends, but to greater things. He instructed His messengers and the world's future teachers concerning the mystery of the Kingdom of God yet again: —oneness with the Father the aim and end, He, Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, without whom no man cometh

unto the Father. He told them that unless He went to the Father, the Comforter would not come, but that if He went He would send the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world neither knows nor can receive, and that He would remain among them for ever, and be in them, and that they should know all things, and whatsoever they asked should be granted unto them.

But a teaching which makes such promises and gives so much power to man, might possibly be misunderstood. In order, however, that the disciples might know its meaning, and of what spirit it was the child,—the Lord and Master, "*knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come out from God and went to God,*" rose up, laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself, poured water into a basin, and washed the disciples' feet.

How wouldst thou have felt, Andres, hadst thou seen Him thus employed, with towel and basin in hand passing from one to another?

And when we think of those who call themselves by His name!

But they are not His, and cannot call themselves after whom they choose.

No man,—though he had found out the course of every star, though crown and sceptre were his, though he were king of all the world,—if he cannot forget all this, and forget too his own life, for Christ's sake, is not worthy of Him.

His doctrine was not for this world—its principal features extend beyond it and are unseen. But because it was to be in this world, it must necessarily have a visible side—and the world must know what it should provide it with. And its Founder gave this example of humility and privation, and appointed love as a sign and token for His disciples.

Now, great and sublime as all these instructions and disclosures were—large as was the amount of rejoicing light,



respecting the New Law and Testament, which must have arisen to the disciples, the stone, notwithstanding, remained upon their hearts, and explanation was yet wanting.

In the school at Capernaum, when He spoke of the efficacy of His body and blood, He had made the enjoyment of these the exclusive means of life, and of an eternal union with Himself; and now He was to go hence unto the Father, away from them, whither they could not follow Him.

Naturally their hearts, as the Scripture says, were full of sorrow, on account of the things he had spoken unto them. And thou mayst imagine, Andres, how they sat round the table looking at Him, and longing after His body and blood.

Lay thy forehead in the dust !

And "He took the bread, gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: Take, eat, this is my body."

"And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and held it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it; this is my blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many to the remission of sins."

He *said* this, and chose to say no more.

And thereupon He went out — to gain the world's hatred and contempt, and to show men "the *good work* from His Father for which they stoned Him." \*

\* Werke. Th. 6. S. 95.

## CHAPTER IV.

IN the years between the publication of the sixth and seventh volumes of his Works—from 1798 to 1803—we meet with no circumstance of note bearing upon the life of Claudius. A visit from his former friend Voss, and the deaths of Schlosser, Lavater, Klopstock, and Herder, occurred within this interval. The new volume of *Asmus* appeared in 1803,—introduced by a preface in which, with characteristic fearlessness and candour, he reiterates his religious views, and discloses plainly his *Mission*. Thus he writes:—

“ Man lives not alone of the crumbs dealt out to him by the learned; but he hungers after something *other and better*—after a *Word proceeding out of the mouth of God*. And this *Other and Better*, this *Word that hangs at our tongue's end* and which we all seek, each one in his own way, I find, to my great delight, in Christianity, as the apostles and our fathers have taught it. Ought I to keep back and conceal it because here and there it is not the public opinion—because people, celebrated and uncelebrated, consider it not good enough, and deride it? What to me are the celebrated or the uncelebrated, when the talk is of earnest things? And what do opinions concern me in matters which are not opinion but fact? do we ask our neighbour whether the sun is shining? Persons of note, deeming themselves wise, know truly many things better than I; but it may yet be that they are ignorant of what lies in the power of Christianity to afford them, and how good and wise they and all

men might become if they availed themselves of the Locksmith as well as of the Lock.

"Only a few are fitted *for teaching this Great Theme*; but it beseems every honourable and humble-minded man, in his own way, and with all faithfulness, to direct attention to it; through earnestness and jest, through good and evil, through weakness and strength; and in every manner possible to remind men of the Better and the Invisible; to take the lead by setting a good example, and *taliter qualiter* to show by the *fact itself*, that a man—not wholly and entirely an ignoramus and without intelligence—may be an *orthodox* Christian. And this is at end that which, as *Messenger*, I have to transact with men, and for which, with true-heartedness hitherto, I have wandered about, tapping at door and window on every side.

"In this Seventh Part, also, I shall pursue the same course, and continue to testify and declare my unfeigned and unbounded regard for the *old Apostolic Christianity*. And truly were I not to do this, I ought not to believe what I believe, and know what I know, and especially at a time when the Christ of the Apostles, in more places than one, is removed from men's eyes, and substituted by another;—*of whom no man can become wise*, and who neither does miracles nor is anything; for we know that they cannot make Him more than they themselves are, if they fashion Him after *their own* reason, and refuse to have Him as He is, and as He was given to us by God."

"*An Asiatic Lecture*," and a short treatise on "*The universal Zeal of Men for Religion and Religious Exercises*," as well as two or three songs of unequal merit, we pass over. The following article was written in 1799, and handed to him for whom it was intended, on leaving home for the first time.

## TO MY SON JOHN. 1799.

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*Silver and Gold have I none ; but such as I have I give  
unto thee.*

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DEAR JOHN,

The time is gradually approaching when I shall have to go the way whence none returns. I cannot take thee with me, but I leave thee behind in a world where good advice is not superfluous.

No man is wise from his birth ; time and experience are the teachers here, and sweep the barn-floor.

I have seen the world longer than thou hast.

My dear son, all is not gold that glitters, and I have beheld many a star *fall* from heaven, and many a staff *break* on which confidence was placed.

I will give thee therefore some advice, and tell thee what I have discovered, and what time has taught me.

Nothing is great but what is good ; nothing true but what endures.

Man is not at home in this world, and it is not by mere chance that he goes about in coarse garb. For only see—all else existing near him and by his side, exists and passes away without being aware of it ; but man is a conscious being, and resembles a lofty and abiding wall, over which the shadows flit. All things endowed with life near and beside him are subject to a discretion and power not their own, and pass hence ; man is intrusted to himself, and bears his life in his hand.

It is not one and the same thing to him whether he go to the right or to the left.

Do not allow thyself to believe that he can counsel himself, and show unto himself his path.

‘ This world is too small for him, and the invisible world he neither sees nor knows.

Then spare thyself useless pains, be not cast down, and consider thy situation.

Esteem thyself too good to commit sin.

Attach thy heart to nothing that is corruptible.

Truth is not guided by us, my dear son, but we must be guided by Truth.

See all that thou canst, and use thine eyes; and with regard to the Invisible and Eternal hold fast to the word of God.

Remain true to the religion of thy fathers, and abhor theological wisecraces (*Kannengiesser.*)

Fear no one so much as thyself. Within us dwells the Judge which deceives not, and whose voice is of greater importance to us than the approbation of the whole world—than the wisdom of the Greeks and Egyptians. Do not think of acting contrary to that voice; and ask it first for counsel as to thy plans and projects. It speaks but gently, and hesitates like an innocent child at first; but if thou honourst its innocence, it gradually unlooses its tongue, and will talk with thee more audibly.

Learn gladly from others, and when wisdom, the happiness of mankind, light, freedom, virtue, and the like, are the subjects of discourse, listen attentively. But confide not hastily and as a thing of course, for all clouds do not carry water, and there are many kinds of wise people. Some fancy that the matter is in them if they are able to speak of it, and do speak of it. Not so, however, my Son. It does not follow that the matter must be in a man, because he can and does talk about it. Words are but words, and where they carry one away with them so easily and nimbly, be on thy guard—for horses with a laden wagon behind them proceed more slowly.

Expect nothing from forcing and taskmasters; and when there is uproar in the street pass on.

When any one offers to teach thee wisdom look him in the face. If he be conceited,—be he ever so learned and ever so famous,—leave him, and slight his information. A man cannot give what he does not possess. And *he* is not free who can follow his own will, but *he* whose will corresponds with his duty. Nor is *he* wise who fancies that he knows somewhat; but rather *he* who is aware of his ignorance, and who has got the better of his conceit.

What is in the brain *is* in the brain; and existence is the first of all properties.

If thou hast to do with Wisdom, seek her, and not thine own; and break thy will, awaiting in patience the results.

Meditate often upon divine things, and rest assured that such meditation will not be without profit to thee,—the little leaven will leaven the whole lump.

Despise no religion; for religion is intended for the spirit, and thou knowest not what may lie hidden under insignificant figures.

It is easy to despise, my son; but much better to understand.

Teach not others, until thou thyself hast been taught.

Interest thyself in the cause of Truth, if thou canst, and allow thyself willingly to be hated for its sake; but know this—that *thy* cause and that of Truth are not identical, and take heed lest they flow into one another, else thou lovest thy reward.

Do the good that is before thee, and trouble not thyself about what may come of it.

Will with constancy, and will heartily.

Be careful for thy body, but not as if it were thy soul.

Obeys authority, leaving others to dispute about it.

Deal uprightly towards every one, but trust thyself reluctantly.

Mix thyself up in no affairs which do not concern thee, but pursue thine own with diligence.

Flatter no man, neither take flattery from any.

Honour all men according to their station—leaving each to blush for himself if undeserving of thine honour.

Owe no man anything, yet act as though all men were thy creditors.

Wish not to be always magnanimous, but be always upright.

Cause no one gray hairs ;—but if thou doest what is right thou needest not concern thyself about this.

Mistrust gesticulation, and deport thyself with simplicity.

Help and give cheerfully, if thou hast, and think no more about it ; if thou hast not, let the cup of cold water be at hand, and think not the less of thyself on that account.

Do harm to no maiden,—remember that thy mother was one once.

Say not all that thou knowest, but always know what thou sayest.

Attach thyself to no magnate.

Sit not in the seat of the scoffers, for of all creatures they are the wretchedest.

Esteem and follow—not the *mock* pious, but the *truly* so. A man who has the genuine fear of God in his heart, is like the sun—dispensing light and warmth, although silently.

Do what is worthy of reward, and require none.

If thou art in need, deplore it unto thyself, and to no one else.

Always have thoughts of good in thy mind.

When I am dead, close mine eyes, and do not weep for me.

Stand by thy mother, honour her as long as she lives, and bury her by my side.

And ponder daily over death and life, if thou mightest

find it, and let thy bearing be joyous; and go not out of the world without first having publicly testified thy love and reverence for the Author of Christianity.\*

There are several translations from the English in the volume now before us. The last Book of the "*Advancement of Learning*"—a work which Claudius styles "unforgettable yet forgotten;" the "*Confession of Faith of Francis, Lord Bacon*," and a few passages from Sir Isaac Newton's Works, having reference to the eleventh chapter of Daniel in connection with the birth and sufferings of Christ, are the most important of these. "I will not deny," writes Claudius, "that my great joy is in Robert Boyle, Francis Bacon, and Isaac Newton. Not so much on account of religion—for it is understood that religion can neither gain nor lose at the hands of the learned, be they great or small. But when, for example, one of the most industrious and indefatigable explorers of nature, who has grown gray in her service, and has learned and known more of her than the most have learned and known; when such a Bird of Jupiter, who, with lofty and acute vision, has laid the foundation of a new and truly great philosophy, hitherto more admired than acted upon; when one of the first mathematicians in Europe, if not the very first—who in his study had presage of, and foretold, what Condamine and Maupertuis, by measurements made beneath the equator and at the poles, found beyond their reach, and who, by his bold mathematics and system of attraction, placed the starry firmament and all creation in a new light—when we see men like these, *with their insight*, not deeming themselves wise, but, after having penetrated further than others into the mysteries of nature, standing hat in hand, as is fitting, beside the *altar* and the greater mysteries

\* Werke. Th. 7. S. 68.



of God, desirous of learning still more \* \* \* \*  
I say it is delightful!"

But the "*Hausvater Einfältiger-Bericht über die Christliche Religion—an seine Kinder*"\* is by far the most important article in the volume. Speaking of it in the preface, Claudius says: "It contains a blessing, despise it not." The excellent Frederick Perthes, already mentioned, found that blessing, and speaks of the treatise with gratitude, as affording him help and guidance just at the time when he most required them. Herbst describes it as containing "the fundamental principles of the Plan of Salvation, according to the thread of the Old and New Testaments, beginning at the Fall, and ending at the Redemption." In a letter to his daughter Anna, recently married to Dr Jacobi, and who had begged for the manuscript—the article not being as yet printed—Claudius wrote: "I will send thee with pleasure the notes on the Doctrine of Christianity. I am about writing something after the Bible, and perhaps shall print it, as at the present time all things are so godlessly distorted, and Christianity is turned into a mere discourse upon morals. The circle that men make is a very singular one. They have shown us, first of all, from the fact that we neither know of nor possess any consolation able to soothe us amidst the discomfitures of this life, and then from the fact that the good which we will to do we do not, but the evil which we will not to do we do, so that we are in an inward conflict and antagonism from which we cannot extricate ourselves—the necessity of a religion affording a higher and superhuman disclosure and consolation: and now they render this higher and superhuman disclosure and consolation again human, and show that we ourselves know and possess all things, and that this law has the upper hand, and constrains us to do that which is not right." The following is the

\* "Simple Fatherly-Account of the Christian Religion—to his Children."

SIMPLE FATHERLY-ACCOUNT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION—TO MY CHILDREN, CAROLINE, ANNA, AUGUSTA, TRINETTE, JOHANNES, REBECCA, FRITZ, ERNST, AND FRANZ. *According to Holy Scripture.*

Dear children, "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. We journey hence as a dream, and are as a sleep; we are like grass that presently withereth, that flourisheth early and soon withereth, and in the evening is cut down and dried. The years of our life are threescore and ten, and by reason of strength fourscore." And then we must die, must leave all that is near and dear to us in the world, and go farther, all alone. And how it will be with us in the grave we know not. Just as little do we know whence we came as whither we go, or what we are here, or the design of our existence, and *we* have nothing at hand on which we can rely, and with which we may console ourselves and calm our heart.

But God has done this for us by means of a Scripture, which He Himself has delivered to pious and holy men, and therefore it is called the *Holy Scripture, Revelation*, or the *Bible*, the *Book of books*.

In it we find information and words such as never man could utter, disclosures concerning our nature and condition, and the whole counsel of God as regards this world and the next.

High as the heavens are above the earth, so high is this counsel above all that can enter into the mind of man; and you cannot regard the Scriptures highly and worthily enough. But of course it is not always the thing itself—sometimes it is only the intelligence of it.

The Holy Scriptures begin with a *state of innocence*, or with *man's position at the beginning*, and teach us that God made him good, wise, and holy as Himself, to have dominion over the earth and preserve it from the Evil One, to live

through His Holy Spirit, and ever to conduct himself toward Him as dear children toward their dear father; they teach us that men, of their own free will, separated themselves from God, the Source of all good and of all happiness, and had fellowship with evil; that, on this separation, their nature remained with them, but the life of it, God's Holy Spirit, departed from them, as *He* cannot have fellowship with evil.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And they allowed themselves to be tempted by the serpent to touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and to eat of its fruits; and after the Lord God had made unto them coats of skin He drove them out of Paradise, and away from the tree of life, to eat of the ground cursed for their sake all the days of their life—to work painfully among its thorns and thistles. (Gen., ch. i. v. 26, 27; ch. ii., and ch. iii.)

And now, inconsolable at their loss, they went out to the thorns and thistles, with feelings of sorrow, shame, and re-

morse, infinitely wretched and unhappy, and there was no help either for them or for their children, except from the reanimation of their nature by the Spirit of God, and a reunion with God. But since heaven and earth cannot unite, this could not possibly take place.

But God is love, and love rests not; it may be disturbed and hindered in its operation and benefactions, but it no more ceases to love than the sun ceases to shine. God loved man before the foundation of the world, and had not lost sight of him even in his need and misery. Touched by his shame and remorse, He took *pity* upon him, and promised a *remedy*.

And this remedy was—that that Life which had existed from eternity and with God, should *appear*; that the Word which was with God and was God, should be made flesh. And this has come to pass in Christ.

This high and *divine* arrangement, surpassing all human knowledge, understanding, and hope, was announced to the very first men for their solace, and the announcement and promise, together with the hope and expectation of *restoration* and of the *Restorer* resting upon them, were handed down from father to son, and to posterity.

Before the Deluge, and for the first thousand years succeeding it, the secret was intrusted to the fathers, and heads of single upright families, and afterwards, as the world became peopled, to a *whole nation*.

Of the way and manner in which those heads of families made use of it, and as regards their worship, but little is *particularized in Holy Writ*; we read only of their nearer relation to God and closer intercourse with Him, and of further disclosures made to some of them—to Noah, and especially to Abraham, and, from the very beginning, *altar* and *sacrifice* are spoken of. Doubtless, however, as some indeed expressly mention, these were as upright men in the midst of a perverse generation, persons enjoying a higher and extra-

ordinary protection and blessing, *enlightened* in the world, and the object of the esteem and attention of their contemporaries, whom they caused to long after and desire a knowledge of *their* worship and *their* God. And judging by the traces met with in all other nations of antiquity, those who may have applied to them with this object in view, do not appear to have returned altogether dissatisfied.

Of course the example and impression made by those heads of families could not be so striking and general as that made by the *whole nation*, where it became a spectacle for all the nations of the earth ; as its great leader, publicly and before the world's eyes, performed miracle after miracle, and by the unexpected exodus from the powerful land of Egypt struck all the surrounding nations with fear and terror. From God he received also the *law* in a sublime and majestic manner, and instituted, according to God's direction, a *public divine service*, celebrated first on a small scale in the tabernacle, and, five hundred years later, with magnificence in the world-famous temple at Jerusalem.

Splendid as was this divine service in itself, it was yet specially *figurative*, and by its purifications and sacrifices was to point to the veritable Sacrifice and the veritable purification that were of the future, while by its figures and outward ceremonies, all which were made and *instituted by Moses according to God's command and after figures shown to him upon the mountain*, it was to be a divine finger-post ; and, as the *most complete* prophecy of the Redeemer and His redemptive work, to occupy and lead the human mind and understanding, and vitally to preserve within the heart the idea of the *Great Salvation*, until the promise made to the fathers should be fulfilled.

Moses certainly had not withheld from men the blessing and the curse bound up with the observance or non-observance of this divine service, and of the *ways of the Lord* ; and at his departure he had taken heaven and earth to

witness that he had placed before them life and death, in order that they might choose life, and that they and their seed might live. But what are we men : they failed to recognize properly this proof of *divine* love and compassion, and their high election ; they failed to recognize properly that the living Word was confided to them, and that they, before all other nations, were to be its possessors,—a *priestly kingdom* and a *holy people*. But in spite of the warnings of their faithful Moses, in spite of the rich fulness and separated position of the country assigned them, they attached themselves to other nations, and, in the very first five hundred years after the Exodus, became a *temporal* kingdom, turned their hearts more or less from *their* divine service to the follies and wisdom of those nations, and grew more or less helpless and miserable up to the time of the building of their temple at Jerusalem, which Solomon undertook for them three thousand years after the creation of the world, and one thousand before Christ's advent, and in which he preserved the Ark of the Covenant together with the entire tabernacle.

But even this splendid edifice failed to answer for long the purpose of its construction, and the next five hundred years were more unprosperous than those which preceded them. The people separated themselves from, despised, and forsook the Lord their God and His ways, and ran after the abominations of the heathen ; experiencing terribly what is the kind of heartache such conduct brings with it.

God had permitted a seed to remain which treasured sacredly the mystery of the Deliverer, longed to see His day, and hoped for His *appearing*. During this period, called the "time of the prophets," He commissioned some of these men expressly to warn the apostate nation from time to time, to remind it of the Deliverer, and to prophesy His *coming*. As this forbearance was also in vain, He overthrew their temple, and cast them among the heathen, to

Nineveh and Babylon. They returned from Babylon, indeed, through the medium of him who at that period ruled the world, and they rebuilt the temple; but evil had obtained the upper-hand, and the good had flown away. For the last five hundred years they sank deeper and deeper, and at the end nothing remained to them but a conceited blind pride over dry bones, from which the spirit had departed. Their heart was wholly directed to the outward; they sought help only from without, and in the outward; and their sense for the true help and the true Helper was lost.

At last, in the fulness of time, one thousand eight hundred years ago, the Life *appeared* here among us on earth; the Word was made flesh and dwelt among men, and they *beheld* its glory, a glory as of the only-begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Children, do not your hearts beat? \* \* \* One wishes for the two wings of Isaiah's seraphim, with which they covered their face; and yet, at the same time, we cannot forbear calling happy and envying the men to whom it was appointed by God to behold His glory, and to be eye-witnesses of this *greatly divine phenomenon*.

We are so fortunate as to possess accounts of His walk upon earth, written by four different persons in the Bible; information which, as you may well imagine, is not only of the utmost importance to us, but also the most remarkable ever given through men, and ever read by men.

He went about in human form, doing good to, and restoring to health, all who were in the power of Satan; He made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, cleansed the lepers, healed the sick, and brought the dead to life—and all this by a mere touch, or word, or glance.

These miracles and acts of benevolence were not indeed the design of His future; but pure love and help were natural to Him; a power proceeded from Him which healed

and assisted every one ; and where help was wanted He would not withhold it. The Jews, too, were to see that God lied not, and that the Deliverer and Helper promised to their fathers, and pointed to by Moses, had arrived.

But Christ had not come into the world for this object, and for the benefit of those alone who then lived ; but also for us and *all* men, from the first even to the last.

“For it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world *to save sinners*.” (1 Tim. i. 15.)

But, in order that you may have the true conception of the *Saviour*, that you may honour and love Him the more deeply and fervently, you must be instructed rightly and properly as to the nature of *Sin* and the *Sinner* ; for when words are frequently used, and often without a meaning, they are suspected at last of *having* no meaning.

And therefore I am somewhat more explicit about *sin*, or the *natural iniquity of man*, or *our state but for* the Deliverer.

How matters stand with regard to what is corporeal of us, you have already heard in part. We are as the flower of the grass, are subject both to good and to evil impressions, and carry, in and about us, the germs of death, and of incalculable distress and frailty, until, sooner or later, they burst forth and put an end to our bodily existence.

With our immortal spirit it is still worse. A spirit has two powers—the power of *knowing* and the power of *willing*, and both these are in such disorder within us, as to be almost irre recognizable.

That which may be known is naturally the domain and field of knowledge, and the objects in this field are things invisible and eternal, things visible and temporal.

Of the former class, undoubtedly the most essential, we *know* nothing. We are conscious, indeed, on looking upon



visible and transitory creatures, that there must be an unseen and eternal Creator; we are conscious, when we feel within our hearts the presence of mild and benevolent sentiments and emotions, that there must somewhere exist a primary *Source of Love*, an essential *Benevolence*, a *dear Father*; but we neither see nor hear Him, and we know Him not.

And our knowledge of things seen and temporal is *tattered* and *fragmentary*, and our eyes see what we will.

Properly, we know only that we ought to know; and it is as if one hand gave to us, and the other took from us.

So too with our *Will*. We know that we ought to *will purely*; but the *impure* attaches itself to us on all sides. We feel within us that good is good; we love the good, and would fain be and do good; but we cannot. The *flesh* hinders the *spirit*, and rules it; and yet the latter is conscious of its superiority, conscious that it is more than the flesh, and should *rule it*.

"By *flesh* and *spirit*," says Luther, "thou must not understand *flesh* to be that alone which has to do with unchaste actions, and *spirit* that which has to do with the inmost heart; but St. Paul and Christ also (John, ch. iii. 6) term all flesh, which is born of flesh—the whole man, body and soul, reason and senses,—because all within him *strives according to the flesh*. Hence, thou mayest call him carnal who, destitute of grace, writes, teaches, and talks much about high spiritual things, &c."

We need no further evidence concerning this matter, for the experience and heart of every man bear witness of it; but you shall hear the free and open confession laid down by an apostle with regard to it:—

"For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would that do I not; but what I hate that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it

is good. Now then, it is no more *I* that do it, but *sin* that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more *I* that do it, but *sin* that dwelleth in me. I find then a *law*, that, when I would do good, *evil is present with me*. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see *another law* in my members, warring against the *law* of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the *law of sin* which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 14—24).

See then, dear children, this is the *law* that, when we would do that which is good, we find within us: *evil clinging to us; the law in our members striving against the law in our hearts and taking us prisoner*, bringing us daily and hourly into small or great trouble, hurrying us away from *one sin to another, the end thereof death; the evil that dwells in our flesh and perishes through lusts, and darkens our understanding; the lusting of the flesh against the spirit*,—and so on.—*This*, and the fact that it is so, this, together with the frailty of our body, is *Sin, Hereditary Sin, the Natural Ruin of Man, the Old Man, the Flesh, the Old Adam, the Seed of the Serpent, Spiritual Death*, which has come unto all men.

The Holy Scriptures have certainly solved for us this problem of our nature, this *for and against* existing in the same being; for the Divine Nature is at once goodness, wisdom, righteousness, love, knowledge, and all perfections in one, and cannot renounce itself, wherever it may be. But our misfortune becomes, if possible, the greater for this. And can there be a calamity like *that* of being in *darkness* while possessing at the same time the necessity of knowledge and light, and the impulse thereto; of remaining in the

dominion of *evil*, while the good is a necessity and at the same time an impulse of our nature ; of subjection to an *ignominious servitude, to an eternal unrest and fear of death*, while conscious that our worth and vocation are such as pertain to a ruler ? And, in addition to all this, there is the knowledge that *we have brought our misfortune upon ourselves* ; that our circumstances might have been so different to what at present they are ; that we have incurred the wrath of a *just and almighty God*, have offended a *loving Father*, and now cannot hope to see His face again.

This is the abyss into which man was cast by the *Fall*, and from which *nothing* could save him ; neither power nor wisdom, neither law nor doctrine.

Truly if the man know what is right he can engage in the struggle of "the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, being at enmity ;" he may—and this is *his* highest business on earth—he may succeed in time, by carefully watching over, and manfully combating with perseverance all the emotions of his breast, in preventing this lusting of the flesh from breaking out into acts of violence—that is to say, he can become virtuous ; but he cannot tread under-foot the serpent's head, he cannot *redeem* and restore to life his soul, he cannot forgive sin.

The knowledge of sin proceeds from the *law* ; but we have not to do with the knowledge of sin here, but with the reality, with the antagonism of flesh and spirit ; for this antagonism is just the cause of man's separation from God, and stands in the way of his righteousness and blessedness—and the law cannot do away with it. Thus the law, or *Moses* and the *Old Testament*, points only to wrath.

And therefore a *New Testament* was necessary,—a means of removing this antagonism, of putting an end to the struggle between flesh and spirit in man, and of establishing peace in its stead ; a means which should be able to unite itself to the spirit of fallen man, or of the divine nature within us,

and render it again free ; there was needed a bread from heaven to give life unto the world ; \* \* \* \* there was need of *Grace* and *Truth*. \* \* \* \* And in Jesus Christ we have all these.

Christ is the way, and no man cometh unto the Father but through Him.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh—”

Or more plainly : “and sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, annihilated sin in the flesh”—“in order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.” (Rom. viii. 3, 4.)

The only-begotten Son of God alone could afford this remedy to the poor and lost human race.

And for this cause “He proceeded out from the Father and came into the world”—as He Himself has summed up His great work ; to this end He, pure and without sin, in the world here, put on the nature of man and united it in Himself to the divine nature ; to this end He was born of the Virgin Mary, God and man in *one person*. And, in the world and before He went to the Father, it was to this end that He must needs suffer and die, and thus enter into His glory.

He says in the parable : “Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone ; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit ;” and to His disciples, shortly after : “If I go not away the Comforter will not come, but if I go away I will send Him unto you.” And Peter, being filled with the Holy Ghost shed abroad upon them, preached to the disordered and confused multitude that “Christ had the promise of the Spirit ;” which was not given, because that Jesus was not yet *glorified*, “by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.”

The Bible gives us in detail the narrative of these sorrows and of this death.

At Jerusalem, after having eaten, for the last time, the Mosaic Passover with His disciples, in a large upper-room furnished, He instituted on the night of His betrayal the Christian Passover—the eating and drinking of His body and blood as bread and wine, the symbols of which, Moses, at the command of God, had already placed in the Ark of the Covenant beside the tables of the law; and from thence He went into a garden by the Mount of Olives, followed by His eleven disciples. In the garden He took three of the disciples to Himself apart, and began to tremble and fear, and a stone's throw from the place He fell upon the ground and prayed, and cried thrice: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." He wrestled with death, and "His sweat was like unto drops of blood falling upon the ground." Then He arose from prayer and met a throng sent out by the High priest, and armed with swords and staves; He was seized by them; led away to the High-priests, Scribes, and Elders, condemned by them to death, and delivered over to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, who, having heard Him and declared that he found no fault at all in Him, yet for all that condemned Him; and like a lamb dumb before its shearers, He was scoffed at, scourged, and spit upon. Wearing a crown of thorns, He was crucified at Golgotha, and when *It was finished*, when His blood had been shed and He had suffered death upon the cross, He rose again on the third day, was seen on earth among His disciples forty days, and as a living man; and on the fortieth, after having assembled and blessed them, after having commanded them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every nation, baptizing in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, He ascended to heaven before their eyes, and ten days afterwards the Holy Ghost was shed upon them.

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It must not be supposed that any circumstance here was casual, and that it might have been different, for the Bible teaches quite otherwise.

"Ye were redeemed," says Peter, "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was *foreordained* before the foundation of the world."

He was "delivered over," of the meditated counsel and providence of God. And hence the prophets, who were acquainted with the counsel of God, could prophesy of Him, His sorrows and death; hence Moses, in the Paschal Lamb, in the serpent lifted up in the wilderness, and in all his institutions, could typify and symbolize, fifteen hundred years beforehand, the mission which Christ was to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Thus, previous to His crucifixion and sufferings, Christ often spoke of them, and foretold, not to His disciples only, what would happen to Him at Jerusalem. "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles, who will mock, scourge, spit upon, and kill Him, and the third day He shall rise again;" but He appealed to Moses also and the prophets, and said, on more than one occasion, that thus it *must* come to pass, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

"Thus it is written, and *thus must* Christ suffer, and on the third day rise again."

"For all *must* be fulfilled that is spoken of me in the law, in the prophets, and in the psalms."

All, therefore, *must needs* have happened and come to pass, as all actually *did* happen and come to pass.

But how and in what manner Christ deprived Satan of his power and overcame the world; how He bore the sins of the world, performed an ample work on our account, and

stilled the wrath of God; how the Spirit became the Comforter with whom we are to be baptized,—how this was brought about, and how Christ's body was meat indeed, and His blood drink indeed,—all this is avowedly great and worthy of adoration: it is hidden from the world, and the angels have desired to look into it, and it will be revealed unto His saints alone. *We* receive it with bowed head, as given to us by Christ and His apostles.

"Through death He hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. ii. 14.)

"To this end hath the Son of God appeared, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.)

"I have overcome the world." (John xvi. 33.)

"Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." (John i. 29.)

"The same is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John ii. 2.)

"Whosoever believeth not in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.)

"Through His death we are reconciled unto God." (Rom. v. 10.)

"Through His obedience are we justified." (Rom. v. 19. Gal. iii. 13.)

"His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." (1 Peter ii. 24.)

"He was delivered for our offences." (Rom. iv. 25.)

"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." (Isaiah liii. 5.)

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." (John vi. 53—55.)

"The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.)

"Through Him we have peace with God." (Rom. v. 1.)

"We are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Peter i. 18, 19.)

And thus on every page of the Bible.

These are clear words uttered by Him and His apostles. And we ask only, how we can possibly deserve so great, surpassing, and unmerited a mercy and benefit, and how we may become partakers of it.

For, in that Christ destroyed the works of the devil, overcame the world, and stilled the Father's wrath, the door of Paradise is again opened; but we are not within it yet, and the works of the devil must be destroyed in man, the world must be overcome in man, and God's wrath, the incompatibility of the Divine Nature with what is opposed to it, must be stilled in man.

"To know the work and history of Christ," says Luther, "is not to know the true Evangel, if as yet thou know not also that He hath vanquished Sin, Death, and Devil."

Through Christ's work of redemption, the kingdom of God is brought near unto us, but *the kingdom of God must be within the man, and the Spirit of God must actuate him.*

But, as we have seen, there is *another kingdom within the natural man*, and he is actuated by *another spirit*, namely—that earthly and carnal mind which is at enmity with God, which understands nothing of the Spirit of God, but regards it as foolishness.

This mind must therefore perish within the man, all carnal affairs must be mortified, the body of sin, the *old Adam*, must die, and be buried with Christ in death. And from this death a *new life* must come forth, and be created anew, so that, even as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so too the spirit of man, fallen and in



sin, may be raised up and made a new creature, that, as beforetime, it may look around it with freedom, and will, freely and joyously, whatsoever things are good.

This change which takes place in man is termed *new birth*; the Scriptures speak of it as "a being born anew;" born "of incorruptible seed," "of the Spirit," "of water and the Spirit," "of God," &c. And this must come to pass in every individual man, or he will remain as he is. "For except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

This change, this putting to death of the old Adam, is brought about by the Spirit, the Comforter, whom Christ hath sent us by His body; and without the Holy Spirit it cannot be effected. Neither can it come to pass of the Spirit alone, and independently of the man's co-operation, for man has certain conditions to observe, if the Spirit-Comforter is not to come, as far as he is concerned, in vain. Man cannot deserve, by works of his own, justification and a state of blessedness, which are and remain the free, unmerited, and pure grace of God, but he may prepare the way of the Lord and make straight His paths.

And this is effected by means of repentance and faith.

"Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

According to the evangelists' narrative, the *Pioneer* and Baptist who went about preaching the *baptism of repentance* for the remission of sin, preceded Him who baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

"I indeed baptize with water *unto repentance*, but He that cometh *after* me is mightier than I."

"*Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.* And they went out to Him confessing their sins."

As in general, so in particular. The individual man must *repent*, that is to say, must *experience a change of mind*.

Now, as you have heard, we are unable of our own strength to *remove* the carnal mind, but we can will and resolve.

This is the sole act which, out of all his former glory, fallen man still retains in his power—the only string of the *divine harp* open to his touch, and the token of his greatness. In defiance of chains and prison-house, he may yet beat upon his breast, and in his inmost heart *turn the back upon his carnal mind, and stretch forth the hands unto God.*

But this resolve is no light and trifling matter, as every one who makes it *in earnest* discovers. It is the *strait gate* and the *narrow way*—it is that which renders Christianity so unpopular, a stumblingblock to the Jew, and foolishness to the Greek. He who thus resolves must be prepared to give up a known enjoyment for an unknown, to hate his own life, and to bear the reproach of the world. But the resolve must be made; it is the sacrifice which truth demands; to it truth has appended her grace, and without it she would forfeit in a measure her majesty.

“Whoso loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me. And whoso loveth son and daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not up his cross and followeth me, is not worthy of me.”

Heavenly things cannot be communicated to the worldly mind. And hence the holy sacraments—Baptism and the Lord’s Supper—may not be administered except after previous confession. And seeing that infant baptism has been introduced, the sponsors must guarantee that the child shall renounce the devil and all his ways and works, &c., and believe in the triune God.

As man turned his back upon God and would neither honour nor trust in Him *when he saw Him*, it is but just that now, *seeing Him not*, he should trust in and honour Him, and turn his back upon himself, if he would again find help and favour.

God could not remit this condition and give His honour to another, else, He must cease to be truth and love; for there is but one God, and all *besides* Him is as nought.

But it is invariably a difficult condition for fallen man; and, spite of his better discernment and daily and hourly occasions, *repentance* is not always at his command, although indeed outward penance may be. He in whom the love of God induces a change of mind, pursues the most precious course. Or else: man must take warning from the justice and omnipresence of God, and from the example of others; for it is not to no purpose that the Scriptures present instances of altered modes of thought and changed minds, of lively repentance and sorrow for sin; it is not told us without design, that David's "bones waxed sore," that his "heart was sorely troubled," and that he "watered his couch with tears;" that Peter "went out and wept bitterly;" that Abraham was "obedient and went out, not knowing whither he went;" and that "Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Through all these, dead though they be, God is still speaking unto us.

The circumstances of life, too, often contribute to this change of mind, and the Bible-expression, that "the cross leads to God," possesses a true and reasonable meaning.

But the *law* serves in an especial manner to render sin exceedingly sinful and mighty, in order that grace may be yet mightier;—when the man diligently regards in this mirror the form which he ought to have, and compares it with his actual form. God, as you know, dear children, is a powerful, a jealous God; visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, to those who hate Him, even to the third and fourth generations; but showing mercy to them that love Him and keep His commandments, even to the thousandth generation; and you know also that according to his *first commandment* you are to have none other gods beside Him, and to fear, love, and trust in Him *above all things*. Now if you look within yourselves, and see the other gods beside,

Him that are there, and which you fear, love, and trust in more than Him, the sight will fill your hearts with shame and remorse, and will grieve and break them—"in order," says Luther, "that we may learn to be shocked at our sin, learn to regard it as no trifling matter, and to rejoice in God alone."

The second thing on man's part is *Faith*.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: *that whosoever believeth in Him* should not perish, but have eternal life."

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son; *that whosoever believeth in Him* should not perish, but have eternal life."

Thus, even as the Israelites, bodily sick, if they would live, must look upon the serpent lifted up by Moses in the wilderness, so must the spiritually sick look upon the lifted-up Son of man, and believe in Him.

But this *faith* is a divine work. Generally speaking, faith is nobler and higher than sight. But as the visible things which we are to see must approach us at a certain distance, so also the invisible things which we are to believe in must in a manner come near us; and when we *do* believe in them they *are* near us. To a thinking man, who, from the wonderful creatures which he beholds, infers securely and with certainty, that there exists an unseen, almighty, and allwise Creator, God is doubtless nearer than to a rude scoffer; and this faith of his thoughts, bringing God nearer him, is surely something nobler and more active than sight. But the belief of the *whole man*—when his emotion and labouring heart, with all its powers, seizes confidently and appropriatively upon the object of its faith, meets it, and becomes incorporated with it—is quite another and a more potent affair; and this object of its faith is the *perfected and glorified God-Man*.

"Faith," says Luther, "is not the human delusion and dream which some hold as faith: it is a divine work within us, and directing our steps. Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty property which faith possesses, of incessantly bringing forth good, without the possibility of evil. Look therefore to thine own false thoughts and vain chatter about faith. —Pray God to bring about within thee true faith; else thou wilt be without it for ever, be thy schemings and doings what they may."

Now when a man, provided with such faith as this, gazes upon the uplifted Redeemer, and, weary and heavy-laden, beats upon his breast, he has performed *his part*, and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, will do the rest.

When he has thus given himself up, thrown away all his props, and sunk, as he thinks, into emptiness and nothingness, he falls into the arms of *Him* who is the support of every one, who only allowed him to wander because He Himself wished to be his support, and whose arms are ever open to receive every returning and penitent sinner.

Hear the beautiful parable of the *Prodigal Son*, from the mouth of Christ:—"He (the prodigal son) beat upon his breast and cried: I will arise and go to my father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and went to his father. *And while he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him.*"

See, dear children, new-birth begins thus; and He who has begun the good work will—if the man himself put no impediment in the way—continue and accomplish it; for, like all other works, it has its seasons and degrees.

The Holy Spirit, as we believe, *calls, enlightens, and sanctifies*. But man may hinder and obstruct in various ways; just as he *only hears* the roaring of the wind, not

*knowing* whence it comes or whither it goes, so he may very easily stray into bye-paths, and regard the miserable fire on his *own* hearth at home as fire from heaven. To do this injures both himself and others. But the matter has, none the less for that, its safe and certain course; and the good clergy know this course, and can advise concerning it; for it is their proper science, and on its account they are justly styled *reverend*.

This old, simple way of repentance and faith, dear children, is called the *Plan of Salvation*, and is the way to life and to the restoration of humanity. There are other ways; but they do not lead to the end whereunto this leads.

For you must not think it a small thing to find that which, shortly before His death, Christ begged of the Father: "that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us,—even as we are one"—to find this, I say, fulfilled in a man.

The Scriptures do not know how to express themselves reservedly and sublimely enough respecting this condition. They call it something that the world cannot receive; a wonderful light; the glory of the Father, and so on. John says:—"And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." And Christ himself says: "My Father will love him, and we will come unto him."

It does not become man to speak of it; we see, indeed, that we cannot, and that he who has it possesses a blessedness, a peace which passeth the world and understanding, a joy that no man taketh from him. Not even death; for though he were dead yet shall he live. He never dies; for death can only deprive him of *what he never had*, but *what he has* he will for ever retain.

This, dear children, is the *Religion of Christ as the Bible teaches it.*

There is nothing more sublime, nothing greater, and no message more joyous. Hold fast to it, and regard it as a light shining in a dark place, until the *Day* dawn, and the Morning Star arise in your hearts.\*

\* Werke. Th. 7. S. 113.

## CHAPTER V.

SINCE the death of his daughter, life appears to have been a sadder thing to Claudius than heretofore. He was now getting into years—verging upon sixty-five; and although his intellectual faculties were unimpaired, yet outward circumstances, of a kind to remind him how frail was the thread on which his earthly well-being hung, naturally preyed upon him, and surrounded him as it were with twilight. As the members of his family circle—those who made home, what it was to him, the happiest place upon earth—one by one left his roof,—some to found other homes, some to rough it in the world, and one to the grave, his mind dwelt upon the time when the connection between his readers and himself, hardly a less sacred tie to Claudius than those domestic ones, would have to be broken; a time probably not far distant. In the preface to the seventh volume of his Works he says: “Between the author and his reader, when they mean well with each other, a kind of love and attachment springs up; and I could not resign my Messenger’s Staff without taking leave in due form, and saying yet one more good friendly word.”

This “good friendly word” stands at the end of the same volume, and is the earnest “Farewell” of Matthias Claudius. Throughout his works a more beautiful and solid piece of thought will hardly be found. On account of its suggestive character, it deserves, and will well repay, attentive perusal.



## FAREWELL TO MY READERS.

And now I will bring my work to a close, take leave of my readers, and proffer the hand once more by way of good conclusion.

I do not apologize to them on account of my Works. I am no *scholar*, and have never given myself out as such. As a simple Messenger, I have not wished to bring forward something *great* but only something *small*—something too little, too insignificant for the *learned*. This, however, I have most conscientiously brought forward; and I declare in all truth that I could bring forward nothing better.

The most of it is but frame- and toy-work, twined like a wreath of flowers around my “cup of cold water,” that it may the more agreeably meet the eye.

\* \* \* \* \*

We live but once in the world, and are not here to talk just as it suits us, and to chop straw. It is no use a man's sitting with downcast eyes, clearing up his throat and sighing; no, he must open his eyes boldly, and look briskly and joyously around him. We do not get through the world by playing the fop and buffoon; and those are badly advised who believe and teach that men have nothing else to do in the world, and that they may live so completely *à leur aise* in it.

Let any one of us only observe how men enter the world and how they leave it, what their position here, and what their dignity. He who can laugh at or endeavour to forget this, or he who can console himself with the *Categories* when he thinks of it, may be a philosopher; but a reasonable man he is not.

Between the *in* and the *out*, too, even when things go on as well as possible, what is man, and what has he?—Heaven

and earth, sea and land, mountain and valley, sun and moon, are his, and these are great and glorious; but considered in their true light, all things that we behold are but external coverings and crusts,—beautiful chests and caskets of jewels, in the midst of which man walks like a *servant* from whom his master has locked them up. He feels, indeed, that it might be otherwise; for what are his bold suppositions, his dreams of the inner connection and of the hidden impulses of nature, else than token and proof of his title to a knowledge of them. But this title is sequestered; and, at the very side of the Fountain of Light, he hungers and thirsts after knowledge; must blow cold and hot, and struggle with all the elements until he be swallowed up of them.

We comfort ourselves with the inward grandeur of man, and glory in what is high and divine in his understanding and reason. Yes, indeed, man is great and divine; but our glorying vanishes, and tears fill our eyes, when we see and perceive that the Great and Divine is hemmed-in against its nature, and it ought to rule.

The course which man pursues in what are termed the arts and sciences, is praiseworthy and noble, but these are at most what they passed for in olden times—a way, and not the end; and he who regards them as the end, and stops there, *sells his birthright for a mess of pottage*, and unsaddles in the wilderness, in order that he and others may admire the steed which should be bearing him on into the Promised Land, where the great *Almoner* dwells.

Purification cannot of course consist in the *use* of what is impure, and if the vessel be full of one's own wisdom, it is clear that no other wisdom can find place there. Hence, if anything worth having is to be brought about, all wisdom of our own, all self-conceit, must retire, and give place to the *Socratic ignorance*. It is only in the lowlands that the waters collect, and alms are in keeping with a man in rags—as also Ulysses experienced, for it was not as a hero and

general, but garbed as a beggar, that he found his Penelope again.


Thus, thought and the thinking faculties constitute but half the man, and withal the wrong half wherewith to begin a change in, and reformation of, the whole, because it is coherent and stands firmly to itself. As little can I help finding the Pythagorean dogma, for example, true or untrue, as I can help regarding the colour black as black. But the Will is able to will and to become altered, and thus to influence the thinking faculties. And he who can will like God, will also learn to think like God—be he lettered or unlettered, a Polyhistor or a cobbler.

It depends, therefore, upon a certain Form of the inward man, upon a certain inward mode of thought, comprehension, or perception—which we are to set before us, and to strive after.

Apart from all else, and whatever a man's creed, this seems to be *reasonable advice*, that he should set before him a Form of abiding character, and hold fast to it under all circumstances. The Perishable is undoubtedly of less value than the Imperishable, and it will profit men little to shift about and alter their mind like the chameleon, which changes colour according as the rays of light strike it.

But opinions greatly differ respecting a Form of abiding character, and one which may be adhered to under all circumstances; every one has his own way of considering the matter—the man of the world thus, the Gymnosophist otherwise; and, *a priori* and without experience, no man has hitherto hit upon the right Form. Ever do we go either too high or too deep; and when experience steps in we have to change our tune, a procedure which involves much care and trouble.

But it is an important thing for either the heart or that Form to be established, and we cannot take too much pains to effect this end. My readers will discover, however, that



the more things of sense prevail within it, the less firm is its basis, and that we must toil and moil, give up much and expel much from our mind, that we may hereafter purify and establish it.

This world, and the things that are therein and pertain to it, lie near us, and our nature gladly applies itself to them and collects them; but they are only things of air, a delusive treasure. What too is temporal and visible concerning ourselves, has neither endurance nor value, and is but a frail tenement, within which *we* dwell.

Only the Invisible and the Spiritual is unchanging and eternal. Such are those genuine treasures which moth doth not corrupt, and which render that Form immovable and fireproof. And *these* it is the business of *faith* to collect.

But in the learned world *faith* is an unknown thing. It does not exist *in abstracto*, and, taken into the hand for inspection, its fruits are strife and discord; but where it dwells and takes root in its natural soil, the human heart, it shows well what it is and what it can effect, and how it is adapted to man in the world.

Looking at it on a small scale and as applied to worldly things, we see how a man, having faith and confidence in himself and in his cause, pursues wholeheartedly and with certainty his way—how his life and nature is quite another thing than that of the barren, care-worn, irresolute wiseacre.

How then will it be with him who puts his trust in eternal and imperishable things, who *has faith in* an omnipresent sovereign Comforter, a Calmer of all discord, and awaits a new heaven and a new earth? Here in the world his feet will be in the tempest, and his head in the sunshine above it; here in the world he will be unharmed, and ever greater than his circumstances, ever contented, forgetting and forgiving, loving his enemies and blessing them that curse him;

for in this his faith he enjoys that better world which comforts him under all trial, and such sentiments, hidden in his heart, serve him until the real treasure is *brought to light*.

We are not placed in the world to no purpose: we are here to ripen for another world, and our body may be regarded as a refining-house, where the pure water is to be separated from the salt. There is but One who can render help here, and to Him be glory for ever. Farewell.\*

*Asmus* being thus completed, as its author supposed, Claudius employed the greater part of his time in translating Fenelon, and in corresponding with his widely scattered friends. Grandchildren were growing up around him, for each and all of whom he had never-failing stores of affection. He loved much to have them about him—they were the crown of his old age, reminding him of other days, and brightening the evening of his life. The joys and cares of both his children and his children's children he entered into and made his own, and well he knew how to sympathize with and comfort them in their seasons of sorrow. There is a beautiful letter of his, dated 1806, to Caroline Perthes, his eldest daughter, on the "going home of her blue-eyed angel," as he calls the recent death of her child; and another to a lady, under similar circumstances. "If we are told on good authority," he writes to the latter, "that not a hair falls from our head without the will of the Father, we may safely trust Him, even where we cannot comprehend his dispensations, and when we seem lost in the ways He leads us. Your little Fritz is not lost, he has only flown like a young bird over the wall into another garden, and you will soon have him again. Well off as he was in your hands, he is now in still better keeping, and he has not to perform that long and

dangerous journey, from which one could hardly come with the innocence with which your Fritz has gone home. Do not grudge him this advantage, but gladly do without him for awhile because of it. When our children died, we, too, wept for them, and yet could we call them back to us we would not, but rather think of joining them where they are. And so will it be with you, when the first pang is over."

In 1809 the second volume of "*Fenelon's Religious Works, translated from the French by Matthias Claudius,*" was published, and the same year a treatise on "*The Lord's Supper,*" also by Claudius; valuable, but too strictly theological and doctrinal for admission here. The third volume of *Fenelon* followed in 1811.

The Wandsbeck Messenger had indeed taken a solemn farewell of his readers, but the staff was not yet to be laid aside: he believed that God had still work for him, and was unwilling that death should find him otherwise than at his appointed task. Accordingly, a supplementary volume, forming the eighth of *Asmus*, appeared in 1812. "I am not yet out of the saddle," he says in the preface to it, "and I seek, as heretofore, modestly and in simple language to bring to mind the true greatness and the inward prosperity of man." In the same place he speaks of being almost in the grave, and declares his conviction that, whatever his readers may have expected from him, he could afford them nothing better than what he had already afforded them. "There is one *Truth*," he adds, "and only *one*. It is not to be taken by violence, and forces itself upon no man, but it imparts itself more or less when sought after with humility and self-denial, with 'fear and trembling,' as the apostle says. Those who would do violence to it, who would arbitrarily make truth, torture themselves in vain, and are like a reed in the wilderness, blown of the wind hither and thither. Human works, as all worldly things, totter, and become changed in form and colour. Truth is abiding, and totters not. And he

who, in simplicity and with stedfastness, cleaves to it, scents the morning air, and holds fast that which he has, until he gain more."

A *Treatise on the Lord's Prayer* consists of a few remarks on its principal petitions. Introducing these, Claudius writes: "The words of Christ are a spring that never dries. As we draw from it, it fills again, and each subsequent meaning which we discover in them is even greater and more glorious than its predecessor." He then proceeds thus to comment upon the words: "*Our Father who art in heaven* :—"

"Luther answers very beautifully: 'God would allure us thereby to *believe* that He is really our Father, and that we are really His children, so that we may take comfort, and pray to Him with all confidence as dear children to their dear Father.'

"This *feeling*, this *faith* in a heavenly Father to whom we are permitted to pray, and by whom the very hairs of our head are all numbered; without whose permission no sparrow falls to the ground, upon whose goodwill towards us everything depends, and whom we would not for the world offend—this *faith* is man's loftiest possession upon earth, the sole counterpoise wherewith to restrain his impetuous and boundless desires and to place a check upon him; the only warrant of truth and justice in the world, and the true *Palladium* of mankind. He who meddles with and disturbs it, forfeits his own happiness, whatever he may get and acquire in exchange.

"And this *faith* verifies and ennobles itself according as we hold fast to the words of Christ, and follow their meaning.

"Lift up thine eyes to the stars, and behold how, far and wide, they sparkle, great and small behind and beside each other; and how this glorious spectacle loses itself in the distance, passing on and on into immensity. But it cannot be without an end: there must be a bound somewhere, and

something else come to view. This immense universe—in *what* does it float, and *what* waves wash its immeasurable shores? What is there where the world ceases, where the last boundary-stars are? Does the *Heaven in which our Father is* begin there? Or is *Heaven* in all and through all? Our Father, *in what way* is He in the world, where the very hairs of our head are numbered?—In *what way* is He *without* the world, and in infinity? And what, in itself, is His great and divine nature?

“Question thyself thus—and thou art dumb, and fallest upon thy knees.

“How would it be if thou hadst more of the mind that was in Christ Jesus when He made this introduction to His prayer?” \*

The “*Morning Conversation between A and the Candidate Bertram*,” is too long to translate in full here, and too excellent to divide into fragments. It treats of the nature and limits of reason and faith, and their relation one to the other. We shall have occasion to quote from it in the following chapter.

The treatise on “*Birth and New-birth*” consists of a series of impressive remarks on the words of John:—“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” The concluding passages run thus:—

“All men know that there is a God. But although, as Paul says, ‘in Him they live and move and have their being,’ they perceive Him only in His works—in the creation of the world—and this to the apostle is not all. ‘That which may be known of God is *manifest* in them,’ he says; and again: ‘They should *seek the Lord*, if haply they might *feel after Him and find Him*.’

“Christ speaks concerning this matter, and at the same

\* Werke. Th. 8. S. 56.



time points out the way to find God : 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'

"He, therefore, who would see God, must be pure in heart, not loving vanity, but renouncing ungodly things and worldly lusts. Thus he is to sacrifice a present enjoyment, which he *sees* and *possesses*, for a future one, which he *hopes for* but *does not see*.

"But how can man do this?—He cannot do it unless he have a certain confidence in the *object of his hope*, unless he have no doubt concerning *that which he does not see* : that is to say, he must have *faith*. As the Bible says : 'Whoso cometh unto God, must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.'

"Thus Abraham left his country and kindred, and journeyed 'into a land which he should *receive for an inheritance*, not knowing whither he went.'

"Thus 'Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season : esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. For he had respect unto the recompence of the reward;—and endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.'

"They *had faith*, these heroes, and fought the fight that is set before us. And there is no other way of approaching the *Intelligent*, and entering into His joy. It is written in the Scriptures : '*Without Faith it is impossible to please God.*'

"We see, then, how sublime and noble a thing *faith* is, and how foolish and weak it must be to speak slightly of it.

"If man were unable to *believe* in God and in divine things, if he could not hold his head erect by virtue of such belief—he would fall back upon his *sensual* nature and perish ! Because that, when they *knew* God, they glorified

Him not as God, \* \* He gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts—unto vile affections—to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.' (Rom. i.)

"Thus, by means of *faith*, man, like physical nature, may bring about a *crisis*, and take part in his own purification and restoration. But left to himself he can neither complete these, nor rectify his failings.

"'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

"But how the corn-grain of all natural wisdom must decay and perish in ignorance, and how, from this death—this nothing, the life and being of a higher knowledge comes forth and is created anew—so far the nose of the sophist cannot reach.

"The *New-birth* is a mystery, and, like all well authorized mysteries, we must take it as it stands, and, without anything further, *believe* and receive it.

"But when Nicodemus, thirsting after knowledge and instruction, was unable to conceive how a man could be born when he was old, and asked modestly: 'How can such things be?' Christ entered somewhat into the matter with him; and gave him to understand that Masters in Israel had aforetime known this mystery, and ought still to know it.

"If we know it not, this is our consolation—that we may possess a thing without understanding it; or, as Christ says, we 'hear the sound of the wind without knowing whence it comes, or whither it goes.'

"But we, like Nicodemus, modest, and thirsting after knowledge, may inquire and look into Holy Writ, which so often and multifariously, and in so many ways, touches upon this great subject.

"According to what we find and are given to understand there, regarding the inward form of one *born anew*, the hull and kernel of such a man becomes *new*; the meaner nature

within him is *sacrificed* to the better, and the *two* are no longer at enmity, but united and *one*; or, the partial Will of the individual, the cause and beginning of all disorder and distress, has become merged into the great Universal Will.

“But no one can comprehend this condition without having trodden that Hero-path, without having often experienced and tasted the heathrust of struggle, and the peace of victory. Only this man can gaze from afar into the *Promised Land*, and in some measure conceive how it will be with him when that veil which separates him from God,—but notwithstanding which, he enjoys so sweet a peace, however circumscribed, disturbed, and interrupted it be,—when that veil is torn asunder, and this peace, full and unrestrained, flows over him from the pure and living Fountain, and cannot be taken from him.

“And this anticipation is the dawn of that ‘treasure hid in a field, the which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and *selleth all that he hath*, and buyeth that field.’

“The price is not low; but the treasure is to be bought at no other; and those who have paid thus for it deem themselves happy in the enjoyment of the good results they had expected: and to some of the purchasers there have been yet other results.

“Physical nature is bound to firm laws, and cannot swerve from them, either to the right hand or to the left. If there existed for it a *new-birth*, the result would be, did we know those laws, both certain and necessary. But man is a *free* being, and is treated as such. God expects his *Will*—the will of his *intelligent* nature—for his *sensual* nature has no will, but only tendencies and impulses. ‘The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit.’

“Thus, as the *New-birth* cannot happen apart from the Divine Agency, neither can it happen apart from that of

man; and he to whom help is to be rendered must *will* to be helped, and believe in such help. And indeed this *Will-ing* and *believing* must not be merely a thought, a contemplation in the mind, but a conception (*Fassung*), a condition of it. For it is in vain and of none avail that a heart talk of belief, and of being broken, or that it be breakable; it must be broken in reality. The Scriptures tells us, that only when this is the case the Lord is nigh unto us.

“Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’

“Apollon, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus, and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John; but Aquila and Priscilla took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.’ (Acts xviii. 24—26.)

“The disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus had not so much as heard whether there were any Holy Ghost, and were baptized with only the baptism of John. Then said Paul: John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ.’ (Acts xix. 3, 4.)

“When therefore Christ speaks of *water* and *spirit*, we must not think of the baptism by water of John, but of the *living water* that *He* gives, and the *Holy Spirit* with whom *He* baptizes.

“In the heart that has endured sorrow, and faithfully completed its time of purification, the Holy Spirit alone is the Author and Finisher. *He consoles, enlightens, and sanctifies*, and is given of the Father to them that ask Him.

“And as the grain of wheat softens in the ground and is dissolved, and by and by, without our understanding how, receives a life after its kind, puts forth shoots, and grows in secret until the blade appears above the soil, so is it, the Bible tells us, with such a heart. It gradually loses its *own*

form, and its previous tendencies and views, traces within itself a something living and powerful, which more and more sets free the spirit and raises it above the world, until the day break, and the Morning Star arise, and the mystery 'Christ in us' is fulfilled in Him."\*

The other articles of the eighth volume of Asmus are: a "*Letter to Andres*" on *Faith*, having especial reference to the biblical narratives of the Centurion and the Canaanitish woman; a series of "*Letters on the Conscience*" to the same, which, although containing many passages replete with thought, are somewhat too metaphysical to be generally interesting; and several chapters written by way of reply to strictures on a little fable of our author's which had given great offence to certain writers. We are not informed as to the full particulars, and must therefore pass over the whole affair without further notice;—heartily thanking, by the way, those who, however foreign to their intentions, elicited articles of so sterling a worth as these.

Meanwhile, war had effected great changes in the neighbourhood of Wandsbeck. Hamburg, taken by the French in 1806, and incorporated as a French city four years later, was freed from foreign yoke in the spring of 1813—just after Napoleon's disastrous Russian campaign. In little more than two months subsequent to its abandonment by the French, Davoust marched upon and bombarded it. Desperate resistance was made, in which Frederick Perthes took a prominent part. All was unavailing, and in a few days the only resource open to the besieged was—flight. Perthes and others escaped with difficulty: his wife had taken the children to Wandsbeck, but shortly afterwards joined him in Holstein.

After the alliance of Denmark with France (June, 1813), Claudius was no longer safe at Wandsbeck, and he, also, re-

\* Werke. Th. 8. S. 84.

paired to Holstein, leaving sadly the place which for forty years had been his home, and where he hoped to end his days. Seventy-three years old and a fugitive—wandering from friend's house to friend's house, and destitute of a home at the very time he most needed one: a truly pitiable fate. We learn with pleasure that an unknown hand presented him while in the depth of his misfortunes with a hundred thalers. In November he went to Kiel, where his daughter Caroline Perthes and her children were staying. His wife accompanied him, Fritz being left in charge of the house at Wandsbeck, and the rest of the family scattered. In the January of 1814, Claudius removed from Kiel to Lübeck, where they remained four months, dwelling in "a miserable little room," and for fare "gruel and potatoes." Better lodgings were afterwards procured; but, owing to the extreme scantiness of their means, they were unable to obtain anything like comfort. The part Denmark had taken in the war caused much anxiety and sorrow to Claudius, who expected very different things from a prince who in earlier days had given so great promise of good.

Spite of physical weakness and destitution, Claudius yet again took pen in hand to proclaim once more the old theme, and this time to enforce its demands upon men with arguments suggested by the recent calamities. "*The Sermon of a Lay-brother at the New Year of 1814*" is the last of his writings. The instability of earthly things, man's insecure tenure of them, and the necessity of "laying up treasure" where moth and rust do not consume—these, and human depravity and sin, removable only by repentance and faith in Christ's atonement, form the subjects of this sermon: on the very confines of another world he unfolds with increased solemnity and earnestness his message.

Wandsbeck being again open to him, he repaired thither in the May of the same year. The hardships which he had undergone had rendered him the mere wreck of his former

self. He was fast sinking, and daily growing weaker. At the urgent entreaty of his daughter Caroline, who with Perthes and the children had returned to Hamburgh, he visited them here, that he might be nearer his physician. Notwithstanding every effort, his health experienced no real improvement, and at times his sufferings were most acute. His amiability amidst it all never gave way; and, far from murmuring or displaying impatience, his gratitude to those about him knew no bounds. "The day is too short to thank thee in, dear Caroline, I must call in the night to my aid." All was well, he said—"the task before me is difficult, but I have a strong Helper in God."

On the 19th of January following, death was plainly at no great distance; of this Claudius himself was fully aware. "All my life I have studied this hour, and I know not how it will end," he remarked, and joined fervently in the frequent prayers that arose from his bedside. On the morning of the 21st he was heard to pray earnestly: "Lead me not into temptation; O deliver me from evil!" Shortly afterwards he glanced round the room, whispered "Good night! good night!" and died as one falling asleep.

Claudius retained full possession of his faculties to the very last. "He died," wrote Caroline Perthes to a friend, "like a man and a great man, and I would that every one who thinks earnestly about himself and his condition had been present at this death-bed." His corpse—beautiful to look upon, it is said—was taken to Wandsbeck, and interred with the greatest simplicity in the church-yard there. Not only his relatives and nearest friends mourned his loss, but all Wandsbeck, and those far and wide who had only known him.

"On the hundredth anniversary of his birth, the 15th August, 1840, a simple stone was erected to his memory in the Wandsbeck woods—his favourite walk. It bears the symbols of his vocation as Messenger—the *staff*, the *hat*, and the *wallet*." \*

\* Herbst. S. 349.

## CHAPTER VI.

IF we admit the genuineness of Claudius's religious profession, it will obviously be superfluous to enlarge upon his moral worth. "The Beautiful," said Goethe, "is higher than the Good—the Beautiful contains in it the Good." Just so, *Christianity*, the *beautiful*, includes *Morality*, the *good*. The testimony of those who knew him well, leaves no doubt as to his sincerity. That he was far from faultless, will be understood as a matter of course; still, there is every reason to believe that his nature was freer from faults and his life less stained by them, than the natures and lives of most men. "What he says of the Gospel of John," remarks one of his most eloquent admirers,\* "is true of himself—a few evening-clouds, and behind them the full moon."

We have seen enough of Claudius's writings to enable us to judge of his literary merits and demerits. Literature was his chosen profession; he believed his true vocation to lie within its sphere, and although obliged more than once to relinquish authorship, and apply himself to more remunerative occupations, he never lost sight of this his first and favourite pursuit. Of its responsibilities he was well aware; no one perhaps more so. It was a serious business with him; and the more serious, as the peculiar department of literature in which he laboured, makes greater demands upon a man than those which have to do with mere secular concerns. Throughout the eight little volumes known as his *Works* there is an earnestness, a singleness of purpose, and

\* Tholuck—in "*Guido and Julius*."



other traits manifest, which make the reader, who at all sympathizes with Claudius's object, feel that he who thus addresses him, be it as *Andres* or not, rightly calls his words a *Message*—in that, while possibly applicable to his spiritual circumstances, it is delivered from first to last with an unction far removed from any that the writer for selfish ends could assume. It was a genuine philanthropy, and not *merely* a design to attract attention, that prompted him to address his most beautiful pages as to those of his own kindred. It may be that to many his life will appear little productive—his *works* but an insignificant result, considering the number of years over which they spread. He certainly *does seem* to have been wanting in activity, but he may have had more to do than we know of, and before condemning him, it would surely be well to get, if possible, at the *facts* themselves.

Those who knew Claudius intimately have borne ample testimony to the *beauty* of his life: a Herder is charmed with his *purity*; a Voss sees in him the reappearance of excellence seemingly almost extinct; a Niebuhr, one of a generation of worthies not to be replaced. The healthfulness of his nature is nowhere more manifest than in the reply given by him, on his resigning office at Darmstadt, to the question: "*What will you do at Wandsbeck?*" "*Translate, continue Asmus, and Commit thou all thy ways.*"\* Here, his life was one of beautiful simplicity. To his family he was at once "prophet, priest, and king," as well as the most affectionate of hus-

\* Referring to Gerhardt's hymn, the first verse of which runs:—

"Commit thou all thy ways  
To Him who rules above,  
All that thy soul dismays  
He will from thee remove;  
He who, through clouds and storms,  
A path secure doth make,  
Will surely show to thee  
The way that thou shalt take." etc.

bands and fathers. The instructor of his children, he was also their playmate; graver businesses over, who so ready as he for the race round the garden, or the romp within-doors! Visitors to his hearth went away charmed with their host; his sunny temperament, his openness, the complete absence in him of all affectation, in a word his *loveableness*, could indeed hardly fail to fascinate all who were brought into more immediate contact with him.

The avowed aim of Claudius was—to teach the *Great Theme of Christianity*.\* Like the Baptist in the wilderness, he preached repentance, and prepared the way of the Lord. When he first entered upon what he loved to call his “mission,” and declared openly for the old Apostolic Faith, the spirit of the age was decidedly antagonistic to Christianity, regarding it more as a museum-curiosity—there for inspection and for the learned to remark upon—than as a life-giving principle. It was an age in which German literature might, with truth, be termed a desert of “dead, dry sand”—the far-stretching fields of verdure presented by the works of a Tauler and a Luther, and others before and after them, were in the distant rear, and well-nigh forgotten; and now the oases were few. It was an age when an author might become popular only by pandering to the crowd, by the sacrifice of principle; an age, in short, when *minorities* alone were safe for those determined to walk uprightly. While comparatively young, Claudius appears to have seen through the shallow philosophy of the day, and into the idolatries, refined and gross, then existing in society. Like a true reformer, before putting hand to their destruction, he set out in quest of a philosophy that might supplant the former one, and an object of worship before which those other idols must give way. In the quiet parsonage at Reinfeld, we believe, he had found, long ago, the true

“Golden key  
That opes the palace of eternity,”

\* Preface to Vol. VII. of his Works.

not perhaps yet the *solution* of the problem before him, but certainly the *prospect* of such solution. Years had passed away since that time; what at first was but *idea* had gradually risen within him into the importance of *fact*; the "treasure hid in a field," once of uncertain worth and ill-defined locality, had at last become to him the treasure of treasures—the *Yonder* had become the *Here*\*—and now, he joyfully sold all that he possessed in order to provide himself with it. In the morning of his literary career, with poverty staring him in the face, and a family dependent upon his exertions for daily bread—an epoch in his life when, had he chosen to suppress his inmost convictions, and to give a bent to his mind other than its real and natural tendency—to bait for popularity *thus*, he might easily have won it, have obtained by so doing the approbation and applause of his contemporaries, and secured a far more conspicuous place in the history of his country's literature than that which at present he occupies. But, no: having come to years, he refuses to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." In the words of the poet:†

"I hear those voices—hear them say to me :  
Come hither—thou wilt sure to us belong,  
The ready minstrel in our ranks should be,  
And twine, as garland, round our cup, his song !  
But my eternal being answered : No !  
To no man's standard can I fealty swear ;  
Disturb the god within me let none dare !  
*My Star I follow, and alone I go.*"

This is the grand act of Claudius's life ; it forms the basis of his writings, and in connection with it most of them should be regarded. Having thus avowed himself an adherent of Christianity, and, moreover, believing it to be the bounden duty of its every adherent to bring it before men's

\* "In Christ the *yonder* is made *here*." Tholuck. † Geibel.

minds, under all circumstances, both by precept and example, his pen was henceforward engaged in the advocacy of its principles, the *Cause* and its welfare his one great concern. Addressing himself to all, but especially to the people—that class which in long past times heard Christ gladly, and whose sympathies, generally speaking, are deeper, broader, and more readily enlisted on the good side than those of any other—he unfolded, in language clear and forcible, yet gentle and affectionate, his *Message*. With a freshness all his own, he tells the “old, old story” of man’s sin and degradation, and of God’s just anger—of man’s consequent slavery and unrest, and then of a Plan of Salvation—a Redeemer—a “peace that passeth understanding.” A good classical scholar, he delves in the mines of antiquity for gems to form a setting for the Gem that transcends all; and with the same object in view, possessing a key to the literary treasures of the various nations of Europe from being acquainted with their several languages, he searches deeply into their caskets. Provided with the seeing eye and the understanding heart, surest passport to her favour, Science discloses to him some of her marvels, and these also he employs in strengthening his principles, and in advancing the *Cause*. No mean poet, he yokes poetry to the task, and in lyric numbers *sings* imports for whose utterance prose might be deemed too tame. Yet withal he professes to bring forward no new thing, and declares that what he has written is but *frame-work* to his “cup of cold water”—merely a wreath to catch the eye. But if only a cup of cold water, the Sun is mirrored in every drop of it—even as the earthly sun in each tiniest spot of dew.

Claudius speaks often of Reason, alone, and in its relation to faith. The majority of the clergy of his day were avowed rationalists, at whose hands Christianity had been so mutilated as to have lost all its sacredness; its miracles were miracles no longer, and the inspiration of the Almighty, once implicitly held to be its origin, was altogether denied it.

Human reason had become the chief object of men's veneration, and was regarded as all-sufficient. To Claudius this appeared a most egregious error, and he took much pains to convince those whom it possessed that it *was* such. "Reason," he says, "is more than a gift; it is, so to speak, a part of the *Giver*. But, like Vulcan, it has been lamed by the Fall. It still preserves its courage, indeed, still sheds its rays around it, and—where it is instructed and can apply itself properly—it still works wonders. But it goes on crutches, and limps." \* The attempt to improve upon religion by means of human reason appeared to him something like an attempt "to regulate the sun according to his old wooden house-clock."† Reason might bring about morality, it is true, but "morality leads to religion, in the same way as poverty and distress conduct to the door of the rich man." In the case of Socrates, he had seen and dwelt upon the effects of the full development of reason, had watched the divine spark as it struggled upwards without exterior help, had discerned the necessity there existed for such help, and now, the problem was: where to find this help, and how to render it available.

First of all, the condition of man, apart from foreign agency, was to be considered; and Claudius rarely loses an opportunity of impressing upon us the fact that the world is a vast prison-house, and we, its inmates, enslaved and in chains. Yet, spite of this, "there is in man," he tells us, "the ruins of a great and divine nature;" and again:

"There dwells a noble slave in thee—  
Whom 'tis thy duty to set free."‡

Disfigured by sin as he may be, he has nevertheless "proceeded from God, and finds no rest save in God." Like the impotent man at Bethesda, he lies, waiting to be made whole.

\* Werke. Bd. 8. S. 67.

† Werke. Bd. 3. S. 106.

‡ Werke. Bd. 7. S. 75.

But the impotent man *believed* in the possibility of restoration to health, and it is just this on which Claudius lays especial emphasis. God had provided a remedy, by the use of which man might be restored from his present sad condition to a future bliss, and by which the chained and wrathful Prometheus might be freed and pacified. "In man," he writes, "there is an immortal seed and germ, in which the treasures of truth and the knowledge of God lie hidden, and from which they may be developed. But just as, in physical nature, the germ cannot develop itself, so cannot this: it needs likewise a reaction from without. \* \* \* This reaction could effect and bring forth nothing were not the germ already there; but without it the germ will remain what it is, and where it is. Thus, without the reaction, the germ within man is sickly, and his ideas of God are but obscure and imperfect."\*

Reason is this *germ*; Christ and His mediatorial work the *reaction from without*. "The partial and individual Will, the cause and beginning of all disorder and distress, must enter into the great general Will."† This cannot be brought about until the man be fully conscious of his state of sin; indeed it is a *result* of such consciousness. But *when* this is the case, when the human Will has become thus incorporated into the Divine Will, and when faith in Christ's Atonement—the divine remedy—has entered into the soul, the germ waits for the *reaction from without*. Then, "all earnestness and decision is necessary, for the sensual part of his nature, which stands in every man's way, is difficult to overcome. For one head cut off, three other heads grow, and the man himself is friendly towards it, always taking its part, and is agile and crafty in devising arts and outlets to save it."‡ "Of himself the slave cannot lay aside his chains,

\* Werke. Bd. 8. S. 79.

† Werke. Bd. 8. S. 92.

‡ Werke. Bd. 8. S. 130.

but he can beat upon his breast *beneath them*, he can *will* to arise and go unto his Father." When this happens, *and not before*, the *germ* and the *reaction* meet.

Christ—the Christ of the New Testament—the historical Christ—the God-Man—is the centre of Claudius's system; and it is to Him that he is constantly pointing. In his beautiful "*Letters to Andres*" we have seen what Christ was to their author:—"a Deliverer from evil; a Soother of all sorrow." "None has ever loved like Him, and anything in itself so good and great as the Bible represents Him to have been, has never entered into the heart of man, and surpasses all human merit and desert. It is a *Divine Form* arising before the poor pilgrim like a star in the night, and satisfying his inmost necessity, his secretest expectations and desires."\* Faith in Him as the Redeemer, is the principal theme of Claudius's later writings, and he never loses an opportunity of descanting on its importance and value to its possessor. He who, drawn by the Father unto the Son, hath this faith, has been *born again*, and thus participating in the benefit of Christ's atonement, enjoys the presence of the Comforter whom Christ promised to the disciples when he left them in the world. "He alone," says Claudius, "is the Author and Finisher. He *consoles*, *enlightens*, and *sanctifies*, and is given by the Father to them that ask Him. And as the grain of wheat softens in the ground and is dissolved, and by and by, without our understanding how, receives a life after its kind, puts forth shoots, and grows in secret until the blade appears above the soil—so is it, the Bible tells us, with such a heart. It gradually loses its *own* form, and its previous tendencies and views, traces within itself a something living and powerful, which more and more sets free the spirit and raises it above the world, until the Day

\* Werke. Bd. 8. S. 98.

break, and the Morning Star arise, and the mystery—'Christ in us'—is fulfilled in Him."\*

This is the consummation—*New Birth* or *Christ in us*—and around it cluster the hopes and anticipations of humanity. The work is done: the carnal mind, once at enmity with God, has become changed; a new life—new aspirations, new purposes, new actions—have been begun; "old things have passed away, all things have become new." And then come the welcome tidings in which Claudius so rejoices: "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*"

Such was Claudius's Philosophy of Religion—at least as we have understood it. For the rest, he held the tenets of the Lutheran church; and without sharing her narrowness. He was no hero, indeed; perhaps, in the general acceptance of the word, not even a *great man*. He has insight; but it falls far short of that piercing vision which distinguishes Lessing; and he is very deficient in the power of broad, all-embracing generalization which marks the productions of Herder. To the icy magnificence of Goethe's prose, and the matchless sweetness and mystic depth of his poetry, Claudius cannot pretend; and no "reader of taste" could compare for a moment the writings of our author with those of Schiller. The peculiar talents which were granted in profusion to these men, Claudius possessed only to a comparatively small extent. Yet, while the *ostensible* purpose of Lessing was to *overthrow* and *demolish*, that of Claudius, both *ostensible* and *real*, was to *construct* and *preserve*. While Herder, notwithstanding his rich endowments, comes to regard Christianity as little else than a Tantalus-cup,—confessedly a *desideratum*, but *not his—for him, out of reach*;

\* Werke. Bd. 8. S. 98.



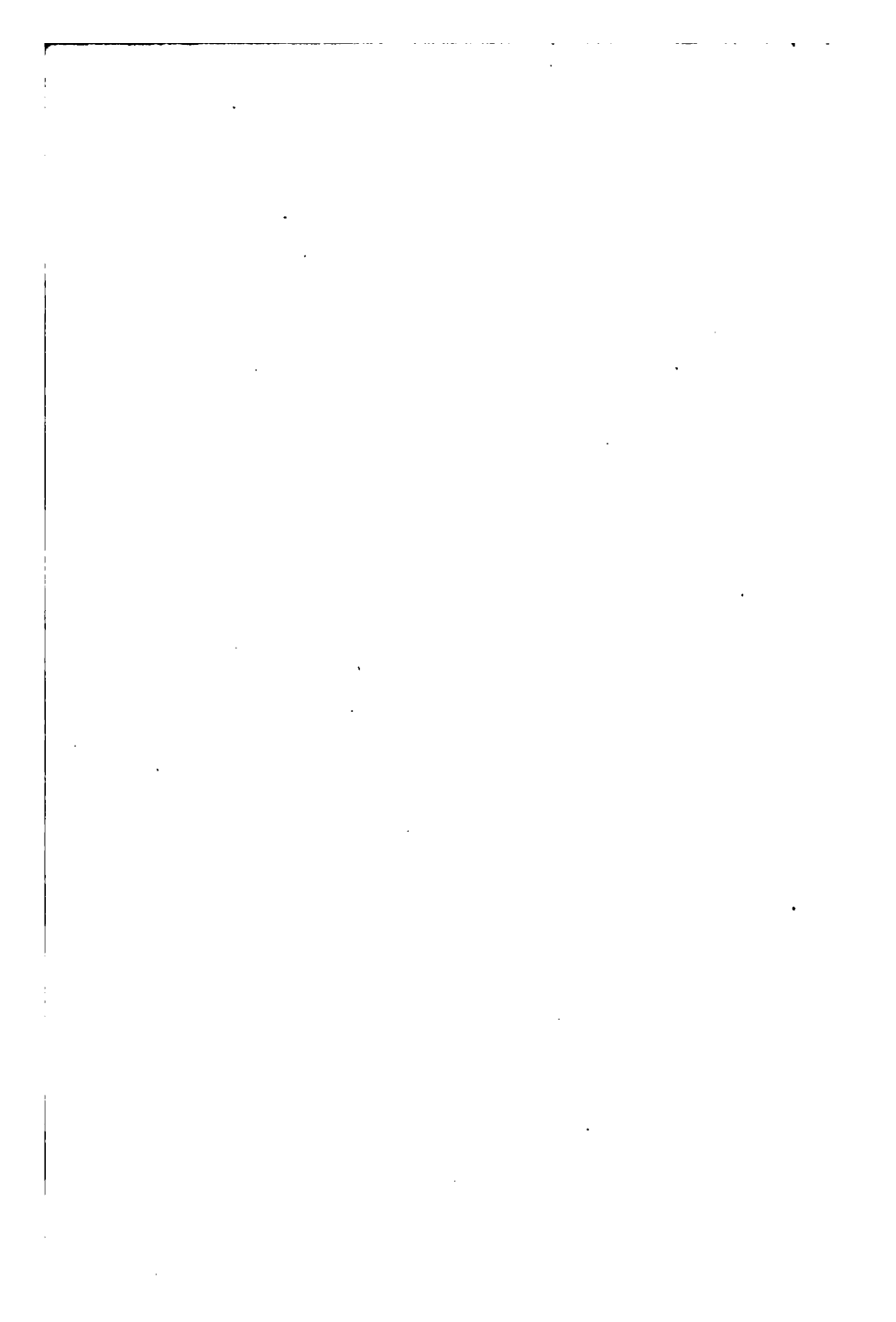
while Goethe, with all his ripened wisdom and splendour of diction, often loses sight even of morality, to say nothing of higher things—Claudius, rejoicing in the possession of a treasure no longer *desired*, because now *obtained* and *being enjoyed*,—that treasure which, as we said, outweighs morality because it includes it, stands up to direct men to where they also may find it, with a fervour and simplicity which disarm criticism, and so rivet the attention to the *matter within*, that the little blemishes of style, the almost *mannerism* which here and there occurs, pass unnoticed. And while Schiller, notwithstanding his lofty *Ideal*, so finely set forth, and his idolatry of the Beautiful both in art and life, affords occasional glimpses of those "*heitere Regionen*"—"calm regions—the home of Beauty,"—but which are *glimpses* at best, and attainable only by the tutored few, Claudius knows of regions calmer still,—certain as life and death; and tells how the very meanest may not merely catch a glimpse of them, but obtain entrance there. While, from the contemplation of Schiller's *Ideal*, the "dull world" grows yet duller, its dulness only enhances the glory of Claudius's *Real*. The world may style him great or not great, but our *Messenger* stood forth the bringer of good tidings, which might well entitle him to the consideration due to recognized greatness.

Little it mattered to him what men thought of him and his words—not to them was it that he looked for approval; so that he only stood well with God, so that his Message carried weight with it, and was received by those for whom it was intended, his desires were fulfilled. Poverty and contumely were alike unable to change his purpose; in the "darkened cage" the bird "sang all the more sweetly." And when old age arrived, and the "vacant chairs" increased in number;—when, in the thought that death might be at no great distance, he addressed to his readers that *Farewell*, of which the last words are: *There is but One who can help*

*thee, and to Him be glory for ever ;—when war had driven him from his peaceful home, he still wrote on, faithful to his task, and taking advantage of the calamities which had befallen his country to impress upon men the Ancient Faith, and to direct them to the Son of God. The Historians of that country's literature may pass him by, mention him with disapprobation, or how they will ; but it still remains true, that “ they which be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”*

THE END.









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